

FULL MOON PRESENTS

DELIRIUM[®]

#2
APR/MAY

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TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD

Lone Fleming Tangles with the
Templars in Eurohorror Classic

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DELIRIOUS WORDS

"BLINDED BY THE FRIGHT"

Like most works of cinema that carry extra personal gravitas, my appreciation of Amando de Ossorio's legendary 1971 Spanish horror hit **TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD** is tied to an awakening, a chapter of my life in which I was open and hungry for experience and was rewarded with a pot of blood-spattered celluloid gold at the end of a dangerous rainbow.

I was 13 and had been reading about a movie called **TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD** in the pages of **GOREZONE** magazine, **FANGORIA**'s sister periodical. The film was being discussed in Tim Lucas' game-changing 'Video Watchdog' column and the issue at hand was that Paragon Video had released **TOMBS** on VHS and it was uncut. Well, uncut save for the climax. In that final sequence, the undead Templar Knights board a train and proceed to hack and slash their way through the cabin. In one harrowing shot, a zombie stabs a mother and her blood splatters onto her child's crying face. The drama here, however, was that not only did Paragon inexplicably remove that scene and replace it with a still-shot of Fleming screaming, but the offending scene was shown without edits on the syndicated "Elvira's Movie Macabre" show mere weeks before. Strange, as most of Elvira's library was culled from Paragon releases...

Anyway, I was fascinated by all this trash cinema skullduggery so when a new mom-and-pop video store opened up close to my home in Toronto, Canada, I was thrilled to find a big box VHS copy of Paragon's **TOMBS** release, though it was licensed by a Canadian distributor so the plot thickened. What version of **TOMBS** was this? Cut or uncut? I had to know...

So I used \$30 I saved from my allowance over the last month to buy the barely used copy (no one in my sensible hood would dare rent something called **TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD**) from the kindly and confused East Indian gentleman behind the counter and ran home to watch. Finally, I had a movie in my small but growing VHS library that was being discussed in the pages of *Video Watchdog*! I felt so included, like I was now part of an international web of intrigue.

Now, the version on that weighty tape was indeed the aforementioned trimmed version but that didn't matter. Simply put, **TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD** blew me away. It was strange, exotic, erotic, beautiful, dreamlike and genuinely terrifying. With its ominous music, pretty Lisbon scenery and surrealist passages, I was in a kind of heaven. I had already developed a fondness for European horror films but this was something even more bizarre and beautiful, flaws and all.

As the years climbed, the cult of **TOMBS** has grown around the world, with pristine digital releases, serious-minded analysis and long-overdue respect ladled on its creator. And yet, the film still seemed like a mystery to me, like it was transmitted from another far away planet and made by aliens.

Which brings us to this, the second issue of Charles Band's critically lauded new cult film magazine **DELIRIUM** and our cover story interview with **BLIND DEAD** star Lone Fleming. Last issue, Charlie revealed that he had licensed 50 Blue Underground titles to stream on his FullMoonStreaming website and I immediately got excited as almost all of these gems were in fact Eurohorror genre pieces. Among them was, of course, **TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD**. So though the mandate of **DELIRIUM** is to examine films that bleed off of the collected Empire Pictures and Full Moon Features universes, the door was wide open to discuss any of the pictures featured on the site.

I jumped on the chance to put **TOMBS** front and centre.

As luck would have it, the beautiful Lone Fleming is still very active in Spain as an artist and thinker and occasional actor and a quick search found her and happily, she was ready to talk. What a treat then, to have the chance to dissect the legacy of **TOMBS** and its maker with one of the movie's founding figures. I hope that if you're a fan of the film, you get something out of that resulting chat published here and if you've never seen **TOMBS**, our interview might just inspire you to explore its many shuddery wonders.

Elsewhere in these pages we have programmed plenty of wild, untamed cult movie mayhem to please most pundits. There is a bit of nudity, plenty of staged violence and acres of wanton weirdness. And we wouldn't have it any other way...would you?

—Chris Alexander/Editor
chris@deliriummagazine.com



POST-EXPLOITATION LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

YES, WE TAKE REQUESTS

Hey, had a question regarding the new magazine DELIRIUM if you don't mind. After seeing the TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD cover of the next issue online, I got to wondering. Looking at the list of Blue Underground titles streaming via Full Moon I see several Jess Franca films. Considering Charles Band's history putting out EXORCISM, A VIRGIN AMONG THE LIVING DEAD and OASIS OF THE ZOMBIES an VHS back in the day, what are the chances a Franca-centric issue of DELIRIUM are in the cards?

Tam Clark

Chris Alexander says:

In my mind, Franca is the most important filmmaker in genre film history and I'd love to do a Franca-centric issue. Shame Uncle Jess won't be around to participate...

EMPIRE SCHOOL FOR WAYWARD CHILDREN

I just want to say that Chris Alexander's "Delirious Words" column in DELIRIUM #1 really hit home for me personally. I too caught the old Empire movies when I was a kid on late night TV and then later via our local video-store. The first VHS tape I ever bought with my own money was actually a used copy of GHOULES on the now defunct Vestron label. Big part of my life and I'm just glad I live in a world where Charles Band is still making movies and now, magazines. Keep up the good work.

-Ed Sampson

DELIRIUM: TOP OF THE HORROR HEAP?

Thank you for such a killer first issue, DELIRIUM team! I am truly impressed and I am already champing at the bit for issue 2! The first issue set the bar high. If this continues, I really think DELIRIUM will be the best horror magazine on the market!

-Jacob Breuer

Chris Alexander says:

As this is indeed issue #2, I hope you still feel as strongly about the content. I know we do...

DOUBLE-DOSE DELIRIUM REGRET

Just finished reading DELIRIUM #1 and my only complaint is that I did not buy two copies! The interview with Stuart Gordon was fantastic as was the feature on Richard Band and the new Full Moon tays. Great read, amazing photos and sexy calars. But if I had bought two copies, I could have bagged and saved one of them. Hell, I might just do that! Great job, guys!

-Barry Carda

DELIRIUM INVADERS POLAND!

I just got my multi signed copy of DELIRIUM magazine! It flew all the way across the ocean from The United States to Poland. It has its nostalgic

value for me (the army of great artists, I admired all those years had signed it!). But besides this collector value, the magazine itself is a top notch. I know what am I talking about, after all I'm a journalist myself writing film-reviews for more than 15 years. DELIRIUM is packed with great stuff, amazing articles and rare photos. It's great to hear first hand from such a talented director like Stuart Gordon and super great, cool actresses like Barbara Crampton. The news about TROPHY HEADS got me really excited (can't wait for Jacqueline Lavell's comeback to Full Moon Family) and I'm really looking forward for HEAD OF FAMILY:GANJA VERSION (btw - Charles can you bring some new mater-

ial with Miss Lavell to this version? Like JL's commentary, or a special interview or - dream-came-true - special appearance in Ganja segments???)

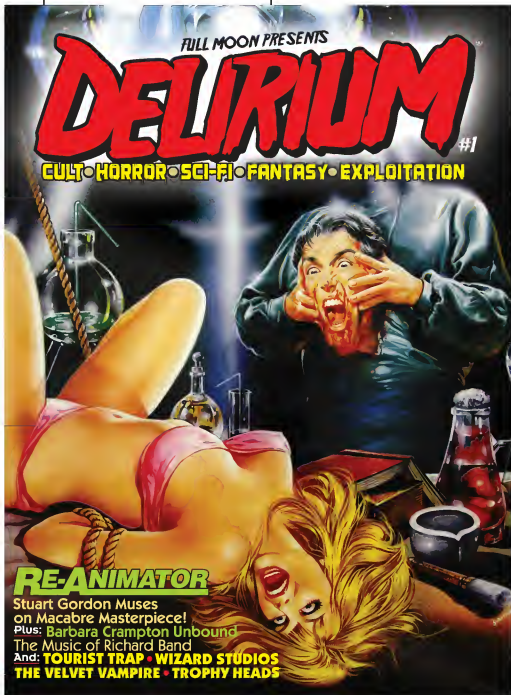
-Arek Grzegorzak

THANKS FOR THE MAMMARY'S

DELIRIUM is awesome and thank you for putting so many shots of Barbara Crampton's boobs in there! Rock on Charles Band and Full Moon!

-Jason Derringer

Raves, Rants and Random Thoughts wel- come to chris@deliriummagazine.com



RE-ANIMATOR

Stuart Gordon Muses
on Macabre Masterpiece!
Plus: Barbara Crampton Unbound
The Music of Richard Band
And: TOURIST TRAP • WIZARD STUDIOS
THE VELVET VAMPIRE • TROPHY HEADS

FULL MOON RISING

What's new and hot in the FULL MOON universe and beyond.

Killjoy's PSYCHO CIRCUS

The only thing that can get a true blue Full Moon junkie scratching at their scabs as severely as they do when news of a new PUPPETMASTER or GINGERDEAD MAN movie in production, is the potential of seeing FM's other beloved franchise star Killjoy return to the screen.

The ongoing series (that first reared its grease-painted head back in 2000), charts the misadventures of a demonic clown that is summoned from his dimension to aid and abet whatever madcap revenge plot his human host has in mind. The action carried over the running time of four films and now Killjoy is back with yet another adventure in KILLJOY'S PSYCHO CIRCUS, an upcoming serialized horror show from director John Lechaga (2010's KILLJOY 3 and 2012's KILLJOY GOES TO HELL) premiering later this year on FullMoonStreaming.com.

"The basic concept of KILLJOY'S PSYCHO CIRCUS is that now, Killjoy is semi-mortal," Lechaga told DELIRIUM of his latest revisit to

berserk Big Top.

"He has to learn how to live on Earth and tackle issues that were never a problem before, including dealing with organizations that could give Hell a run for its money. Stuff like U.S. Immigration and the Internal Revenue Service. Yes, Killjoy and his posse have to get jobs and learn how to operate in their new environment. They are still bloodthirsty monsters, but there are a lot of distractions with their new found corporeality. Killjoy is especially amused and annoyed by bodily functions and dysfunctions that we take for granted."

But KILLJOY isn't just a one dimensional villain, nor has he ever been. And in KILLJOY'S PSYCHO CIRCUS, our beloved, beastly Baza actually attempts to save the world.

Sort of...

"This is a continuation, like the last film was," notes the director.

"We enter the story roughly two years after the last movie. Beelzebub, the Devil acting as

judge in Killjoy's trial in KILLJOY GOES TO HELL, has been demoted because he inadvertently let Killjoy escape. Beelzebub's only way back into Hell is to retrieve Killjoy's spirit and bring it back with him. For his mission Beelzebub is given resources of epic proportions but an credit with hellish interest rates! Beelzebub will happily threaten all of Humanity just to get Killjoy's spirit back to HELL and regain his privileges. Hell has an awesome private club. You have no idea."

By dragging the wraith into the so-called "real world", Lechaga and company are planning to have a blast playing with cinematic conventions but rest assured, KILLJOY'S PSYCHO CIRCUS is still very much a classic KILLJOY flick, if not the ultimate KILLJOY flick.

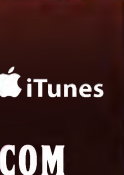
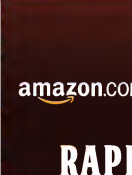
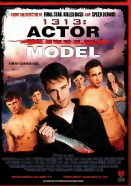
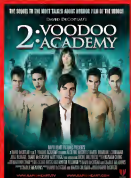
"Now that Killjoy is an earth we may integrate him into the Full Moon universe a little bit," Lechaga says.

"I would also like to explore some sci-fi themes. I am interested in what is being done with comic book and superhero movies these days. Killjoy and his gang are more like supervillains in certain ways so I want to explore that. Of course Killjoy is an evil demon, but with each movie, fans like him a lot more than any of the protagonists. That makes it a little tricky. I have to figure out a way to make him the hero without giving up his bloodthirsty, malicious, mischievous personality. The challenge is to "keep his teeth". At the end of it all, Killjoy has to be able to look in the mirror and say: "I'm mother-fucking Killjoy!"

Keep reading DELIRIUM and visit www.DeliriumMagazine.com for more information on KILLJOY'S PSYCHO CIRCUS as the production heats up.



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LONE, SURVIVOR

Actress and artist Lone Fleming fought the sightless undead in Amando de Ossorio's legendary films TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD and ATTACK OF THE BLIND DEAD.

By CHRIS ALEXANDER

There was a period, a golden age for European horror, one that coincided with a demand in the US for grittier, sexier material, a wave launched post BONNIE AND CLYDE and one that evolved right in the middle of the visceral media coverage of the Vietnam war. With the MPAA loosening their belt, a wave of "new guard" young filmmakers emerging and the movies at the drive-in mirroring the real sex and shenanigans that went on in teenagers back-seats, European distributors saw an opportunity to make some money by injecting their fantasy films with grand dollops of suddenly commercial and permitted sex and violence, while never sacrificing that patented atmosphere, eccentric narrative arcs and textural sensuality that served as the hallmark for the best of overseas shock.

In the middle of that wild wave

came Spanish director Amando de Ossorio's terrifying and surreal 1971 shocker LA NOCHE DEL TERROR CIEGO or as it was known in the US and other English language territories, TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD (or in the truncated AIP version, simply THE BLIND DEAD). Often dismissed as a Latin redux of Romero's groundbreaking zombie shocker NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD, TOMBS is something richer, darker and ripe with mythology. In it, three friends and her college friend Betty—go for a pleasant train ride into the Portuguese countryside.

However, as the ride progresses, we learn in flashback that Virginia and Betty had a lesbian relationship in school and now, as Roger and Betty appear to be getting a little "chummier" than she'd like, Virginia has a momentary breakdown, jumps from the moving train and wanders to the ruined nearby abbey nestled at the foot of the hill. And that's when the terror begins.

Virginia's comely presence rouses a mummified sect of blood-drinking, centuries dead Templar Knights, their skeletal, eyeless and hooded visages shambling out of their graves in a mass of fog, wielding swords, riding equally desiccated horses and looking for victims. Shot in gauzy slow-mo, the Templar attack sequences are the stuff nightmares are made of and the horror film

that supports their appearance is equally eerie.

Ossorio's signature magnum macabre opus would spawn three more Templar companion films—1973's ATTACK OF THE BLIND DEAD (aka RETURN OF THE EVIL DEAD), 1974's THE GHOST GALLEON (aka HORROR OF THE ZOMBIES) and 1975's NIGHT OF THE SEAG-



ULLS—but none would reach the heights of fright that TOMBS offers in its finest hour.

At the center of TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD's humanity is a compelling turn by actress Lone Fleming as Betty, a strong woman whose love for her murdered friend spurs her on to solve the mystery of the blind monsters. And Fleming is no stranger to horror. Along with TOMBS, she would star in Ossorio's ATTACK OF THE BLIND DEAD and his 1975 EXORCIST clone, DEMON WITCH CHILD as well other shockers like Mario Sicilano's BLACK CANDLES and 1973's IT HAPPENED AT NIGHTMARE INN directed by her husband of many years, HORROR EXPRESS legend Eugenio Martin. With her blue eyes, strong features and earthy sexuality, Fleming's presence always added a kind of intelligent sensuality to whatever picture she graced and it's that intellect that makes her one of the most interesting survivors of the Spanish horror boom.

Now in her 60's, Fleming looks fantastic, embraces her cult movie past and now has a successful career as a fine artist, working in paint and sculpture. She's kind, bright, passionate and enthusiastic about pursuing her first love, acting, once more with a starring role in Victor Matellano's upcoming horror film



WAX, also starring Geraldine Chaplin, the great Jack Taylor and, posthumously, the iconic Paul Naschy.

Delirium had the honor of speaking with this living legend of European terror, hearkening back to her time with the heartbeat-tracking Templars while musing frankly on art, film, love and her legacy.

DELIRIUM: Let's go back to your early days in cinema. What was the climate in Spain like at the time creatively? Was it hard to find roles? Did you have to audition a lot?

FLEMING: You know there were a lot of films going on when I came to Spain. Really, it was almost an industry because we had a lot of comedies, a lot of terror or horror films. Everybody was really working and we didn't get a lot of money. You know I started from the bottom but I'm very professional and that is one of the most important things for you to get the role. If you're good, if they like you and you're professional then it's much easier.

DELIRIUM: At what point did you meet your husband? Was it during a film?

FLEMING: We met on the film, as you call it in United States, *DEATH AT THE DEEP END OF THE SWIMMING POOL* with Carroll Baker and Michael Craig.

DELIRIUM: Ah, so you met on set. That's fantastic. What was that initial connection? Was it love at first sight?

FLEMING: Yeah, it was. And then we went out and it went on and off and I went to Denmark and I came back and it went on and off again for many years and of course it was a secret.

DELIRIUM: Do you ever go back and watch any of your older films?

FLEMING: Sometimes if I have to go to a festival and I know they want to ask me about something then I go in and have a look at it. I never like myself in films.

DELIRIUM: Why is that?

FLEMING: I don't know... (laughs).

When you do a role you sink yourself so much into it that you don't know how you're going to come off on the screen. I never think about if the light is correct on my face, if I look better this way, I just jump into the role and I couldn't care less if I'm not pretty from that side or the other.

DELIRIUM: The late Jess Franco spoke often about how hard it was to make these kinds of films in Spain initially because of General Franco's pious rule. Did you feel any effect of that? Did it adversely affect the arts in your opinion?

FLEMING: I suppose it mostly affected the political side for writers, and for



directors if it was a horror film and they wanted nude scenes they had to shoot it twice so the other European countries could buy it so sometimes they had to cut scenes but really I hadn't been in a lot of scenes like that and I never made a completely nude scene.

DELIRIUM: I know...I looked.

FLEMING: (laughs) You know all my fans in the beginning, they were always looking, "Lone! What's the matter? We cannot find any nude films with you!" I said no, you won't find any.

DELIRIUM: Why was that? Why did you make that decision when so many of your colleagues were doing nude scenes?

FLEMING: I think it must have been because of my character and also



because I started living alone when I was 15 and I started working alone. I think I have so much luck in my life and it must be something in my character that is serious that I want to do my work and that's it. I'm very open though so I don't really understand it...

DELIRIUM: What was your take on a lot of the horror films at the time when nudity and sexuality was so much in the forefront?

FLEMING: For example, Jess Franco's films? I knew him...

DELIRIUM: I knew you were friendly with Jess and his partner Lina Romay at some point. At what point did you know them?

FLEMING: Three years ago I went to a festival and Jess Franco was there and I had known Lina for years before that. I never met Jess before and it's funny because later, I met him again in Malaga, a year before he died and he looked at me and said "Oh, Lina! You must make a film with me" I said "yes!" and he looked at me and said "no, you won't and I said "you're right!" (laughs). He knew it! He was so sharp in his mind! He could

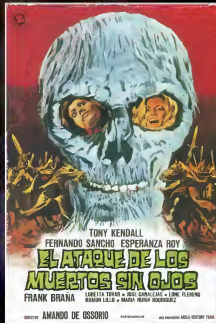
just see in my eyes I would never make a film with him! (laughs) He was really a funny guy. He could make everybody laugh.

DELIRIUM: And a very smart man. Very stubborn in his ways, there's no doubt about that.

FLEMING: I only saw him twice in my life but a man like that... you know immediately how he is.

DELIRIUM: Let's talk about Amando who obviously is a very different character, personally and creatively, than Franco. Can you talk about him both as a man and as a filmmaker?

FLEMING: As a man, well we worked three weeks together on the first **BLIND DEAD**. Amando and I got very friendly and he was a close friend long after the movie wrapped and for some time, until I started up with Eugenio. We used to have coffee where he worked and we talked about art. He was a very kind man but what I loved about him was that he lived in his fantasy world. He just loved the Templars. He never had children so those were his children and he lived it so much, you cannot believe it. He used to



MAKES 'Night of the Living Dead' LOOK LIKE A KIDS PAJAMA PARTY!



come down in the morning in Portugal where we were shooting and he'd have these drawings and say "Lone this is a scene - I know you understand me - this is what I want you to do today." Really he was directing through his drawings and I don't think many people know that and I don't think he did it in other films but he did it on that film.

DELIRIUM: What was it like shooting with the blind dead themselves? Was it at all a creepy experience or was it kind of goofy? Can you remember the climate on set when you were doing those scenes?

FLEMING: You know it was creepy but fascinating because it was such hard work for Amado. You could say in this film he didn't direct us, his actors, too much because he knew he could rely on



us so he was all the time working with the Templars. The costumes were so heavy and it was hot and to make the men function in the costume - they were sweating, they couldn't talk. And to make the horses function it was really incredible. I used to stand there when I wasn't shooting just watching him and say "My God really that was a lot of work!" He never tired. You could see how he loved it.

DELIRIUM: He was creating a new mythology with that film, whether he knew it at the time or not. Was **TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD** a big hit in Spain when it came out?

FLEMING: In Spain it went alright but in all other European countries it did very well. I know in Germany it was a number one hit and all in South America and all other countries. But you know Spain is different, what can you do about it? (laughs).

DELIRIUM: Do you think Amado ever felt marginalized in his own country to some degree about his work?

FLEMING: Yeah, maybe a little. He could have had better respect here but it doesn't matter because he knows now how important his films are...really he does, wherever he is.

DELIRIUM: So you were in the second **BLIND DEAD** film - **ATTACK OF THE BLIND DEAD** - which is not as good as the first, but still an interesting, fun film and a great Templar picture.

FLEMING: I liked that role. I liked very much the scene where I save my daughter - I loved that. You know I don't think many people really look at that scene but I think it's great.

DELIRIUM: It's the humanity of the film, in many respects...

FLEMING: Exactly. I loved that. Amado said to me, "Lone, I would very much like you to do this but of course it's not as big a role as **TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD**. I said don't worry - I would love to do it.

DELIRIUM: Did he ever offer you any roles in the other films?

FLEMING: No ... I was probably moving

on... I don't know. Maybe I was making some other films. I've done a lot of Spanish comedy, you know...

DELIRIUM: That's funny too, because when you look at your resume, you've starred in more comedies and yet the world remembers you for the horror films. Isn't that funny how that works...

FLEMING: Exactly. Yeah, it's funny. That I'm remembered for horror films.

DELIRIUM: No matter what you do they will just remember you being chased around by the Templars, that's going to be your greatest legacy.

FLEMING: A friend of mine, a filmmaker named David Garcia Sarinena, has written a script for a short film with the Templars that takes place today, in modern times. I cannot say more than that. We will shoot it in July and then some in September.

DELIRIUM: That's brilliant. We need a new **BLIND DEAD** film. Now, outside of that, I want to talk about your explorations into fine arts.

FLEMING: Sure. I started at a young age with art because my mother was a sculptor and she made very good watercolours and then I came to Madrid and I started little by little painting and I always had these figures in mind that I wanted to make and it has taken almost my whole life to get it clean, you know what I mean? I started with men and women in nice positions and now I have made gays and lesbians and that is selling very well.

DELIRIUM: How did you stumble into that market?

FLEMING: It happened in a very important auction. I sold some paintings and then I put on some of these drawings with men and women and then a girlfriend I had who worked there said "why don't you make one with gays and lesbians?" So I did it and they sold five and they wanted more but the auction said "oh no, we cannot sell that. That's out of the question." So now I have started again and I've sold six this month.

DELIRIUM: Speaking about gays and lesbians, let's flash again back to **TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD** to "that



scene", the flashback love scene between you and Virginia (played by actress Maria Elena Arpon). It's not an explicit scene at all, it's very romantic and gentle, but it's still a very early lesbian scene in a horror film. Can you talk about that?

FLEMING: (laughs) When we were going to make the scene, Amando came to me and he said "Lone, I don't know how to make this scene because I've never known a lesbian". I said "Amando, I haven't either! So what are we going to do to?" he said "Lone, you must do it - you and Elena" I said "OK. Go and buy a bottle of wine and a rose" I don't know why I asked for the rose. We drank half a bottle each and you know, we just did it so beautifully, I think. I really loved that scene.

DELIRIUM: Were there a lot of out-takes? Did you laugh a lot or did you just go to it?

FLEMING: We just went for it.

DELIRIUM: You make a very convincing lesbian.

FLEMING: For that, you really have to get into the scene and that was a indeed difficult scene. It's kind of like my drawings. If you can imagine, my drawings are just one black line with the bodies and nothing else and it's a lot of work. I have to do a lot of drawings and then clean them and clean them and clean them.

DELIRIUM: Is this your own style or are you influenced by any other artists?

FLEMING: No, it's my own style. I started to do it really whenever I was working. I started just drawing these lines and I said one day I will come out with them and I have now but it has taken me a long time because I don't have time just to sit and draw and draw and draw. My sculptures are really the same style also.

DELIRIUM: Back to the films, there seems to have been a Spanish horror renaissance in the past decade. What are your thoughts on contemporary Spanish horror, are there any filmmakers that you think are doing exciting work today?

FLEMING: I don't have any favourites. There are some very good ones. I'm not for favourites, I like the films or I don't like them. I think there are many who have a lot of talent but there is no money. I think a lot of these young directors have been

studying in the United States but then come back and there is no money so they have to make these no-cast movies and it's the same. When I think of Amando, what he could have done if he had money. They have to make the film for almost nothing. They don't pay the actors and they don't get paid either but the need to work is so great and I think if they had



money and the facilities they could do really fantastic movies.

DELIRIUM: Tell us one thing that maybe you'd like your fans to know about you that they don't. One secret about Lone Fleming...

FLEMING: One secret...hmmmm...oh, I should have thought about that (laughs). I really don't think I have any secrets.

DELIRIUM: That's your secret, then. That you have no secrets!

FLEMING: (laughs) No, my life is an open book!

To learn more about the world of Lone Fleming go to www.lonefleming.blogspot.com



THE BLIND DEAD LEGACY

DELIRIUM takes a brief look at Amando de Ossorio's quartet of sightless shockers.

TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD (1971)

Romero's **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD** may have been the commercial catalyst to spur Amando D'Ossorio on to helm this brooding nightmare, but **TOMBS** is a much more fantastical affair and one steeped in a rich mythology. Depending on which version you lock your eyes on, the film either

begins with a sequence of the still living Templars circling and hacking a young woman to death and drinking from her bleeding wounds or simply jumps in on the credits themselves. Either way, the audience is introduced quickly to a key element of the picture in Antón García Abri'l's chilling, chanting ambient and experimental theme music (almost identical to strains used in the 1970 Paul Naschy vehicle **WEREWOLF VS. THE VAMPIRE WOMAN/WEREWOLF SHADOW**), blasted over shots of monastic ruins. The theme is terrifying. And so is the film, a magnificently grotty shoe-string-shot Gothic fantasy laced with a gauzy romantic sheen a film full of atmosphere, dread, light lesbianism, nudity, cruelty, lush photography and terrifying scenes of the shambling, sword-wielding undead galloping across their equally mottled mares in slow motion. **TOMBS OF THE BLIND DEAD** has aged spectacularly, a completely alien and unique cinematic experience then and now.

ATTACK OF THE BLIND DEAD (1973)

Also known as **RETURN OF THE BLIND DEAD**, Ossorio's fascinating, faster-paced companion film/remake of the first **BLIND DEAD** classic has too many characters and not an ounce of the mystery that **TOMBS** so carefully unwound during its lean running time, but it's still an entertaining and often frightening bit of Eurohorror mayhem. The mythology of the Templars and their respective executions differ greatly from the first one, as revealed in a bloody, bizarre pre-credits sequence, but upon rising, the rules

remain the same.

ATTACK wastes little time bringing the Templars back from the grave and the audience is treated to some jarring close-ups of their mummified, skeletal faces as they ride and hack their way across the countryside with the intent to crash a panicked street party. After the initial set-up, the film unfortunately settles down into a more conventional **NIGHT OF THE LIVING DEAD** scenario, with our heroes barricaded in a villa while he hungry dead amass outside. There's also a bit of farcical comedy injected into the film, which somewhat hampers the tone. Luckily the film succeeds with a series of gory, tense set pieces including a raid on a remote cottage, an escape tunnel beheading and legendary bit where a little girl stifles her screams after one of the Templars tries to skewer her to a wall.

THE GHOST GALLEON (1974)

The **Blind Dead** return in this much-derided, considerably cheaper third film which finds a gaggle of intrepid amateur sleuths wind up in another dimension, on the haunted ship of the title. Said ship echoes the myth of The Flying Dutchman and houses a horror more terrifying than the Demeter ever could. This ghost ship is indeed the vessel of the living, blind dead Templar monsters we all know and love.

Even hardcore **Blind Dead** fanatics cite (sight?) this one as a failure. So did Ossorio himself, whose budget was so low that the ghostly death boat itself was only HALF a boat, a cheap set that ensured whatever budget they did have went to masking its brevity with crates of dry ice. But the tone of **THE GHOST GALLEON** is deathly grim and the images of the Templars climbing out of the bowels of the ship are ripped from the most shuddery of bad dreams as is the nihilistic cli-

max when they emerge, dripping and hungry, from the ocean to climb up onto the shore and devour what's left of the cast. Light on gore and sex, **THE GHOST GALLEON** is still a must see. At sea.

NIGHT OF THE SEAGULLS (1975)

The final Ossorio **BLIND DEAD** epic is considered by many to be the best and it certainly is the darkest and most other-



worldly. Riffing on Lovecraft lore, the film transplants the terror of the Templars into a tale of a superstitious death cult inhabiting a sleepy coastal village. Said village's elders sacrifice their daughters to the monsters to ward off any kind of assault, resulting in a few choice sequences of rituals and the grisly, crab feasting aftermath. There are also plenty of remarkable and familiar sequences of the dusty Templars galloping across beaches at dusk and pre-dawn, mist swirling around them. But really, we don't see much of the Templars this go around. Rather, Ossorio hones in on a tale of ignorance and cowardice, of people too terrified of their crushing curse to alter the course of anything, instead resigning themselves to their fates. On that level **SEAGULLS** is a great horror film, but certainly not the finest of the four **BLIND DEAD** efforts. All four films will stream on www.FullMoonStreaming.com and will be released in new DVD releases later this year from Blue Underground.

—by Chris Alexander



Enter the



Full Moon gives curious couples some seriously sensual cinematic shocks.

By SMITTY ALLENBY

There was a time, during the peak of the direct-to-home-video feature film boom, when Full Moon honcho and DELIRIUM publisher Charles Band had his horror-loving fingers in another, more hormonally pleasing pie, that of pure erotica.

In the 1990's Band developed "Surrender Cinema", a sweeter alternative to his more mainstream genre picture offerings that showcased sexy sci-fi and fantasy movies catering to couples and the erotically curious. As most mom and pop video stores sported a beaded curtain blocking off their hardcore XXX

pornography section for the raincoat set, Surrender Cinema's selections stayed on the less shameful side of that divide and featured a dizzying array of titillating titles like FEMALIEN, THE EROTIC

HOUSE OF WAX, DUNGEON OF DESIRE, THE VIRGINS OF SHERWOOD FOREST and many, many more.

But as the Internet reared its webbed-head and sex films of every sort became instantly available in the privacy of one's own home, the popularity of soft-core erotica dipped somewhat and Surrender Cinema became another chapter in the ongoing Band legacy.

Rolling out now as an offshoot of our FullMoon-Streaming service is the "EroticMovieHouse", a one-stop shop for all your strange, sexy and quietly kinky needs, hot movies that you can watch alone or with a partner and that will offer viewers choice selections from the Surrender Cinema library as well as loads of other remarkable classic and contemporary carnal entertainment.

Here's what's playing now on the Surrender Cinema section at the EroticMovieHouse:



HUNTRESS: SPIRIT OF THE NIGHT (1995, Dir: Marc Manos)

There lies a beast deep within us all and Tara is about to discover hers. Returning to her ancestral home in the tiny town of Brecon, North Wales, for her father's funeral, the red-haired beauty uncovers a dark family secret. At the same time, strange feelings of intense desire and passion seem to overwhelm her. But with her sexual awakening, Tara unknowingly falls prey to a curse placed upon Brecon many centuries ago and begins an unearthly transformation. She is suddenly empowered with acute animal instincts and incredible stamina and strength... but at a terrible price.

LURID TALES: THE CASTLE QUEEN (1997, Dir: Ellen Cabot)

Thomas Dunsmore is about to embark on the most extraordinary journey of his life...an erotic excursion through time. While playing what he believes to be a simple arcade game, Thomas soon discovers that the bizarre machine is much more than it seems. Transported back to Cromwellian England, he lands in the midst of an overheated, bawdy battle for the rights to a magnificent estate and for the heart of the lusty Lady of the Castle.

FORBIDDEN ZONE: ALIEN ABDUCTION (1996, Dir: Lucian S. Diamonde)

One of the many aliens who regularly visit and explore the Earth decides to bend the rules and perform a forbidden nocturnal experiment on three unsuspecting but gorgeous human females. The women discover their shared experiences when they discuss what they think are only dreams.

PETTICOAT PLANET (1996, Dir: Ellen Cabot)

Commander Steve Rogers crash-lands his craft onto a desert planet inhabited only by beautiful women. He finds himself to be the only man. For the first time in 20 years there's a man in their midst and friends become foes as the sex-crazed women corral him.

Alongside these campy, imaginative and carnally satisfying Surrender Cinema gems (each title will sport an option called





"Hot Spots" where less patient viewers can isolate the wettest and wildest clips from the films), you'll find sub-sections like "Dark Romances" (which feature romantic, erotically charged Full Moon Features classics like 1992's Sherilyn Fenn vehicle MERIDIAN) and "EuroErotica", a special section that gives more serious fright fans an endless supply of European sex/horror masterpieces like:

THE GIRL FROM RIO
(1969, Dir: Jess Franco)

The Harry Alan Towers produced spy



farce features all manner of undressed and barely dressed ladies including the lovely Shirley Eaton and the incredibly gorgeous Maria Rohm. A fantastically fun bit of (bum) cheeky pulp fiction from Franco, who deftly combines exotic locales with impossibly perfect female

flesh.

JUSTINE DE SADE
(1972, Dir: Claude Pierson)

The Marquis de Sade's infamous novel of sex and sadism JUSTINE gets a kinky overhaul in this sweaty French romp that finds actress Alice Arno (a Jess Franco regular) starring as a naïve lass who is used as a plaything for a litany of horny men. Plenty perverted, with punneling encounters of every persuasion but also gorgeously produced and packed with patented De Sade wit and wily wordplay.

EMANUELLE IN AMERICA
(1977, Dir: Joe D'Amato)

Notorious and explicit Italian entry in the internationally EMANUELLE series stars the comely Laura Gemser as the titular erotic explorer, this time bumping up (among other things) a vicious snuff movie ring. Plenty of hot encounters ensue all seen by the ever leering eye by Mediterranean smut auteur D'Amato.

On top of all this sultry content, EroticMovieHouse will also sport some incredibly sensual segments called "Erotic Secrets". Here, we've assembled a plethora of adult cinema's sexiest sirens who, in lushly produced video clips, will read hot, uninhibited stories of explicit seduction for your viewing pleasure. These clips – that feature actresses Missy Rhodes, Siri, Cherie DeVille and Tanya Tate among others – will not be pornographic but in their purring portent, will definitely stretch the limits of an 'R' rating. If it's heat you want, look no further than these dirty, delightful secrets and the lovely ladies who take great pleasure in revealing them...

So put the kids to bed, power up your device of choice, turn down the lights and turn up the heat. The EroticMovieHouse is wide open for business...



THE LADIES OF

TROPHY HEADS



Full Moon's latest enterprise casts
(in more ways than one)
cinema's hottest legends as...themselves.

By CHRIS ALEXANDER



Rolling out its noggin-lopping lunacy on our 24-hour mad-movie site FullMoonStreaming.com is Full Moon's new series **TROPHY HEADS**: a sick, shocking, salaciously funny salute to psychos, severed heads and scream queens that defies easy description but manages to encapsulate everything we

love about lowbrow genre entertainment.

Charting the demented adventures of a mama's boy psycho (played by Adam Noble Roberts), whose unhealthy obsession with horror's most storied screen sirens comes to a, er, head when he devises a plan to trap 'em and 'kill em, **TROPHY HEADS** is designed to pay

homage to the past while careening madly into contemporary fan culture weirdness. Once our fevered anti-hero gets these poor, hustling heroines in his clutches, he savages them and removes their craniums, mounting their wonderfully preserved heads on his walls. And yes, his mama IS proud of him...

Each installment of **TROPHY HEADS** is not only jammed with ample gore, guffaws and comely girl flesh, but is littered with legitimate scream queen royalty all of which have strolled through Band's doors before.

In honor of the May premiere of **TROPHY HEADS**, **DELIRIUM** aimed its attention at the still (thankfully) attached skulls of the ladies in question to reveal their motives about starring in this new chapter in Full Moon's seemingly endless legacy of lunacy...

Linnea Quigley as LINNEA QUIGLEY

"I loved the script! Charlie Band was the first person I really worked for in LA and also Michelle and Brinke were in that film together as well so it was great to all work together again. My character is a God-fearing but annoying woman and it was fun to have my head cast. I've actually had everything cast at some point, but this was the first silicone casting I've ever had. The whole thing was a blast!"

Jacqueline Lovell as JACQUELINE LOVELL

"What drew me to the project was the concept. I thought the idea was brilliant. I had not worked with Charlie since the 1990's so it was nostalgic fun to be part of this iconic tribute to great women in sci-fi horror cinema. The character I play in the movie is myself. I tried to keep it as real to life as possible. Initially when I received the script, I could not believe how much the character sounded like me and different things I say. It was almost as if the writer had been secretly spying on me. Charlie had given all the actresses his Blade doll, which I believed must have been a recording device to collect information for the writing of the film. Getting my head cast for the film





tos of herself to make a living. The real deal is married to a paving contractor running a parking lot maintenance and repair company for the last 28 years. I had a manager for a short while to do the cons but it did not last that long, maybe a year or two of which I only attended maybe 3 or 4 shows. I am now back to square one just making a living, putting our daughter through college. I don't look for work or to do shows anymore but if a good friend needs a helping hand or has a project for me I come out to play. TROPHY HEADS was a gift!"

Brinke Stevens as BRINKE STEVENS

I have a long and happy history with Full Moon and when I heard that six *Scream Queens* would be cast, I was thrilled. Linnea Quigley and Michelle Bauer were included, because we're such dear friends. Jacqueline Lovell and Denise Duff were an added bonus. Reading the script, I couldn't stop laughing out loud! I've never met TROPHY HEADS writer Roger Barron, but he mysteriously nailed all our personalities. I've had my head

cast about a dozen times... and it never gets any easier. It's a slow, messy, claustrophobic process under the best of circumstances. This session was slightly different -- and more difficult -- because my eyes needed to be open, I had to be smiling, and they used a new silicon base which was heavier than traditional alginate. There wasn't enough Vaseline protecting my face; so when the mask came off, it ripped out almost all of my eyelashes on both eyes. Horrifying!

Darcy DeMoss as DARCY DeMOSS

Charlie Band has the formula for success. He's a great guy who makes his actors feel totally comfortable. I've had other roles written specifically for me, such as my character in THE UNTOUCHABLES TV series, written by Christopher Crowe. But, this one was written for me, to play me. What's not to have fun with? I got to be stalked by a fan, then killed, and then I got to go home! To experience TROPHY HEADS for yourself go to www.FullMoonStreaming.com and get mounted immediately...

was a first for me. My daughter had actually gone a few months before to the same studio to get her head cast for a movie and she told me it did not hurt except when it caught on her eyelashes. Everything went well until it was time to pull the cast off my face. I felt like my entire face was being ripped off. Suffering for the art, I looked forward to seeing myself beheaded in the movie."

Denise Duff as DENICE DUFF

"Having done several conventions over the years, I knew TROPHY HEADS was a sort of campy gift to the fans. The script version of Denise is career driven, a "look at the bright side" kind of gal, which is much like real Denise but her sometimes snarky competitive edge is not me. That made the conflict between me and Jacquie waaaaay more fun to play! I documented the whole head casting process time with my phone (go to www.DeliriumMagazine.com to see the footage - ed). I had a head cast done once before for an indie film years ago and THAT was a horrifying claustrophobic scenario. But this was easy, soothing and super fun."

Michelle Bauer as MICHELLE BAUER

"When Mr. Band contacted me, I was excited and that excitement grew with the script and the concept. I was so amazed he thought of me when he had so many beautiful women over the years to choose from. When I found out he was directing the project himself, it sent me over the top. I couldn't stop smiling for a week! The version of Michelle I play is running a Fruity Juice Bar on the Santa Monica Pier selling smoothies and pho-



MURPHY'S LAW

By CHRIS ALEXANDER



Trapped in the subterranean prison that holds our hallowed queens of scream, is **TROPHY HEADS'** secret woman weapon, the astonishingly beautiful and alarmingly funny actress Irena Murphy. Murphy plays the part of the "Naked Explainer", the sort of Greek chorus to the campy shenanigans that riff all through each episode of the series. Turns out our hapless sorta heroine got kidnapped in error by **HEADS'** lunatic mama's boy and now has to hang around – literally – in the prison, commenting on the absurd action and gently bitching about her misfortune while cheerfully topless.

Not just a rare beauty, Murphy can also act and has a wicked sense of comedic timing.

DELIRIUM opted to give readers an eyeful of Irena's words, wisdom and wonderfully comely visage. Enjoy...

DELIRIUM: The camera adores you. Was it modeling or acting that bit you first?

MURPHY: Acting for sure. I remember seeing my high school stage on orientation day and thinking, "that's home." I actually became a hairstylist and makeup artist after I graduated and started modeling because of it. I was working on photo shoots and I'd jump in. I did a lot of that. You learn a lot about your angles and how to adjust your body so it's more flattering. Hopefully I was able to add some of that to my scantily clad performance in **TROPHY HEADS!** We'll find out...

DELIRIUM: How did your travels lead to the mad world of Charlie Band?

MURPHY: I have no idea. Sometimes you just cross your fingers and hope for the best. In this case I happened to get a great manager and an agent and I told them I wanted to have fun and do interesting roles and BAM! This audition came through and I was the right girl for the part. If it's not fun I don't want to do it. My character Julia isn't supposed to be a Trophy Head at all, she got kidnapped by accident. Wrong place, wrong time. She's a slightly bitter, neurotic girl that just went to get a massage and then gets wrapped up in this craziness. I love the character. She has a dry sarcastic sense of humor. She's just like me!

DELIRIUM: Let's talk nudity. Are you really as uninhibited as you seem?

MURPHY: Not at all! I'm very picky about who I choose to do any type of nudity with. I love Charlie Band movies and I thought the character was really smart and fun. If it wasn't I wouldn't have done it. It's hard because you want to make sure you're representing yourself well in the film industry. You have to walk a fine line between being careful about how you're perceived and how you conduct your career and also just saying "Fuck it! I'm young and free and this is going to be fun as shit!" I really am fairly conservative in my real life. I don't need to be the center of attention. But if I'm working with a great photographer, director, artist etc, I don't have the



same boundaries. It's a different thing. I guess that's why I love acting. You get to be someone else.

DELIRIUM: You worked with some of B-cinema's greatest names in this TROPHY HEADS. Any stories to tell?

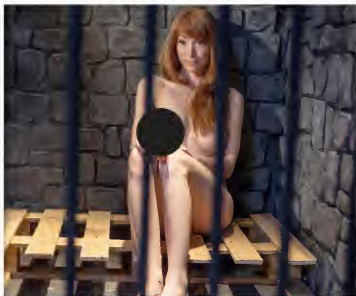
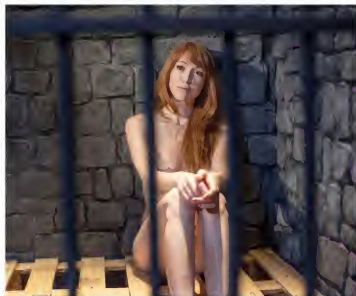
MURPHY: First of all it was really great being able to work with everyone on this. I didn't know all the details until after I was cast. These are scream queens I grew up watching. Seeing them on set talking

about their memories and history in film was really cool and it made me want to be in the club! It seems like there's a lot of camaraderie in the horror movie genre. We took a BTS shot with Charlie, Linnea and Michelle and I was naked so I was trying to pose tastefully and Michelle told me "Hey, don't cover up too much! If you have a Ferrari you gotta show it off every now and then!"

DELIRIUM: Can you talk about working

with Band?

MURPHY: He was so incredibly sweet. He's really professional and easy to work with and he let us do some improv and have fun. I mean I was topless most the time so it could have been really uncomfortable! He never pushed me to do anything I didn't want to do and most of my "exposure" came naturally. He really made me feel at ease. I was happy to be one of Charlie's girls...



BRIDE OF THE MASTER

Actress Carolyn Purdy-Gordon has been horror legend Stuart Gordon's key collaborator in more ways than one.

By CHRIS ALEXANDER

Part One

In our last – and first – issue of DELIRIUM, we shone a bright, green spotlight on the mind of Stuart Gordon, whose 1985 sci-fi/horror comedy RE-ANIMATOR still stands as a landmark of Grand Guignol. Nestled deep within the confines of RE-ANIMATOR's wonderful ensemble cast – including Jeffrey Combs, David Gale, Barbara Crampton (also interviewed in DELIRIUM #1) and Bruce Abbott – is the lady who has consistently graced Gordon's stage, screen and home: Stuart's wife, actress Carolyn Purdy-Gordon.

In RE-ANIMATOR, Purdy-Gordon plays Dr. Harrod, a Nurse Ratchet-esque MD at the Miskatonic University Hospital. Harrod's a stern, snarling force that has little patience for the plight of Dan Cain (Abbott) and has the personality of an iced carp. In Gordon's follow-up Lovecraft picture FROM BEYOND, Purdy-Gordon returns to her hubby's horrifying folds as an even more malevolent MD, a ghastly ball-breaker who gets her eyeball slurped. For her next round in the "family business", the lady took center stage as a matriarch from Hell in Gordon's dark fairytale, DOLLS. From there it was ROBOT JOX, FORTRESS, THE PIT and THE PENDULUM and more. If her husband helmed it, Purdy-Gordon graced her

share of the film's frames.

DELIRIUM has always found Carolyn Purdy-Gordon to be a unique screen presence, one whose legacy is often overshadowed by her famous filmmaker husband. We opted to spend some time with her and we're certainly glad we did...

DELIRIUM: I know all about Stuart's background but I really don't know a lot about you. Are you a very private person? Do you do a lot of interviews?

PURDY-GORDON: No, I don't do a lot of interviews but it's not that I'm particularly private. I think it's probably more that I am remarkably mainstream. One might even say bland.

DELIRIUM: Let me interject and say the most exciting people I know always claim that they are anything but...

PURDY-GORDON: I'm a mid-western small town girl, born and raised and I think there were tons of other ones like me back in those days – and that's what I mean when I say I'm very mainstream. I don't think there is anything in my background that would particularly jump out at you and say "wow, what a remarkable person".

DELIRIUM: How does one so mainstream end up being nude on stage in a little the-



atre in Wisconsin in an adaptation of PETER PAN?

PURDY-GORDON: (laughs) One falls in love with somebody like Stuart and is willing to do whatever it takes to keep things pecking along. Also, I really believed in





the cause. I believed in the show and the principles he was fighting for. I don't know if he talked to you about PETER PAN as an allegory for what was happening to us back in those days. This all transpired well before you were born, and you may possibly have heard about it from your parents but there were the hippies - i.e. the good guys - and the cops - i.e. the bad guys (laughs) - and it was very cut and dry, very stark. Your choices were to be on the side of the good guys or the side of the bad guys. In my mind that's the way it seemed. We were students at the University of Wisconsin when all of this protest against the war in Vietnam was going on and the police were brought in to subdue the protest and the demonstration and they were brutal in their tactics so the PETER PAN play was a response to that and that's how a small town Wisconsin girl gets embroiled in nudity and (laughs).

DELIRIUM: And hard time too? Weren't you arrested as well?

PURDY-GORDON: I was arrested and I

was charged but I've never been in jail. I don't even think I got booked although I could be wrong. If memory serves me, I don't think either one of us were fingerprinted and photographed and all of that. We were brought to court and there was an arraignment but we were released on our own recognizance. This is all complicated by the fact that there was a local election going on at that time and as soon as the guy won the election, he withdrew the charges against us. At the time we were just sort of his political pawns - "I'm gonna clean up the city of Madison," said this guy running for mayor. His name was

Bill Dyke. The fact that he could not find anyone to testify against us sort of made his case a little difficult to take to court (laughs). The only guy he could find was a convicted child molester who it turned out had not seen the show.

DELIRIUM: I said this to Stuart too - in a roundabout way, you benefited as a company, as artists...

PURDY-GORDON: There was a terrific amount of publicity for all of this and, to a certain segment of the student population, we were heroes. Something I was totally not prepared for, but I loved it when that happened. That was like "Fuck Yeah!" (laughs)

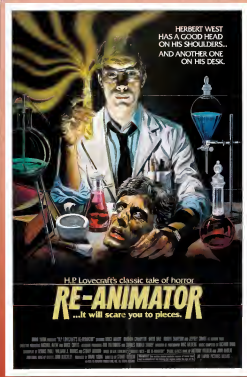
DELIRIUM: You were Stuart's girlfriend at the time...

PURDY-GORDON: No, we were engaged. The interesting thing about that is that he had gone through the very chivalrous procedure of asking my Dad for my hand in marriage and my Dad had agreed to it and he turns around and casts me in this part in his play and my father felt hoodwinked.

My father could not grasp that; he thought it was all sort of part of one big master plan. First I'll ask for permission to marry her then I will sully her publicly. There was no connection there at all but anyway my Dad felt he had been hoodwinked.

DELIRIUM: When you guys launched your first feature film in RE-ANIMATOR, was your father aware of this naughty little movie that you were producing with your husband?

PURDY-GORDON: No, my Dad never saw that movie! I think he probably is aware of it but no, horror movies are not in my family's list of entertainment. I never saw a





tooting my own horn like that would totally be unacceptable.

DELIRIUM: Now when it came to finding a role for you in the film, did you have your pick of the litter?

PURDY-GORDON: No, I was too old and not suitable at all for an ingénue-type of part like Barbara played. When I met Stuart I was a nursing student and my Dad is a doctor and I had spent many summers and weekends working part-time as a nurses' aide both at hospitals in Janesville and Madison, Wisconsin. So, I was very comfortable in the medical milieu and I knew that would be a part that would be very easy for me to play and I wanted something that would be easy and accessible for a first film role. It was challenging enough to just do a movie. I wanted something I felt I could excel at with a fair amount of ease.

DELIRIUM: Dr. Harrod is a bit of a ball-buster too. She isn't the

villain of the piece but she certainly hampers some of the hero's actions.

PURDY-GORDON: I don't know what to tell you about that. I guess my husband thinks I have ball-busting potential as an actress. I don't know what to say about that because that's not the only ball-buster doctor I have played. There is another, Dr. Bloch in *FROM BEYOND*, who is a total bitch.

DELIRIUM: She is! But she gets her just desserts in that particular picture.

PURDY-GORDON: [laughs] Who needs two eyes? One is plenty. Give me a patch and I'm good to go.

DELIRIUM: Now were all the movies you've made with your husband through the years equally as fun to make as *RE-ANIMATOR* or were some more challenging than others?

PURDY-GORDON: That's hard to answer. They were all fun in their own ways. They were all different. I really enjoy the process of movie-making. I think it's fascinating and I almost without exception enjoyed working with everyone that Stuart hired – cast and crew. Each movie had its own special perks. I really enjoyed working on the movies that we shot in Charlie's castle (in Italy where many mid-period Full Moon features were shot – Ed). That was absolutely fabulous. That was great fun. He'd had portions of the castle equipped with electricity and plumbing and really nice furnishings. Who the hell ever gets a chance to really live in a castle? The only thing was [laughs] when we were shooting *CASTLE FREAK* in that space, they were shooting a scene late one night in the corridor right outside our accommodation and I was in the room with our three children and the shot that they kept doing was the shot of Barbara Crampton walking down the corridor and something happens to startle her and she screams and begins to run. So they kept doing take after take and my kids would just start drowsing off to sleep and then "pit-pat, pit-pat, pit-pat... AAAHHH!" and the kids would be wide awake again and we would be back to square one and this



horror movie until I met Stuart. Never.

DELIRIUM: Horror movies are now irrevocably part of the fabric of your family. Is it just the white elephant in the Purdy room, then?

PURDY-GORDON: [laughs] No. I think my sister and my brother are probably... well, I don't know if they've ever seen *RE-ANIMATOR* either, now that you mention it. I'd have to ask them. Isn't that ridiculous? I don't know if they've seen the other movies. In my family it would be considered putting on airs to say to my siblings or my dad "you guys gotta see this latest movie that Stuart did – I'm in it!" that would be like "who does she think she is? Lah-di-dah!" That would not be cool. So you have to understand my family is extremely white bread. Northern European descent. Very restrained and subdued in their reactions to things, so





went on for what seemed like forever. Welcome to the world of movies, kids! **DELIRIUM:** Well your kids were literally raised on movie sets. These are very explicit, graphic films. How much did you shield from them? When did you let your guard down or did you ever reconcile that?

PURDY-GORDON: Stuart and I had very different attitudes about censorship, as he called it. I would call it parenting. My feeling was there are certain things that are elements of your films and your stories that these children of ours are too young to process and therefore we aren't going to expose them to it and his attitude was, "if you mystify it, it will only make them more curious and I want these kids to see that the way that we make the monster is with this kind of goo and this kind of fake blood and this sort of puppetry or whatever elements are being put to use. He wanted to show that to the kids but ... we've had mixed results. Let me just put it that way. There is a scene in **DOLLS** where there is a whole closet filled with malevolent dolls and our youngest at the time, Jillian, saw them and she was maybe three at the time and she said to Stuart "are they all bad dolls?" and Stuart said "Yeah pretty much" and she said "even the one in the blue dress?" There were like a hundred dolls in that closet! She points, he is finally able to ascertain which one she is talking about and he says "nah, I think she just fell in with a bad crowd." He wound up seeing it that each of the girls - we only had two daughters at that time - was given one doll from the collection. There was quite a lovely collection of antique reproduction dolls. Then again,




there are other instances where it hasn't gone so well. There are some times when they were just not able to process what's being created in the movie so I wasn't going to let them see it. For the most part he and I have been able to come to an agreement. The interesting thing is that Stuart himself as a kid had an overactive imagination and I think he probably has

told you about the time he went to see **THE TINGLER**. I hope I'm not telling tales out of class! His parents gave him and his brother a buck each or something to go to the afternoon matinee at their local movie theatre. This was in Chicago back in the 50's or early 60's so he and David go to the movies together. William Castle was famous for all his little pranks and strategies to bring in audience members - park an ambulance in front of the movie theatre and carry someone out who was overcome by the scary movie. In **THE TINGLER**, some of the seats were wired with a mild electric jolt when the Tinger came on screen. I think they also had something where they had strings rigged and the Tinger came off the screen and down the string like on a zip line into the audience. Stuart got so scared! [laughs] I think he was ten or eleven; he got so scared he ran out of the movie theatre and left his kid brother behind. They had to go back and fetch David. He also read, when he was around that same age and way too young to be doing this, he read Bram Stoker's *Dracula* and spent the entire summer with his windows closed. He would not open the windows at night. Summers in Chicago are brutally hot and muggy and his parents couldn't figure out what was wrong. They took him to an analyst who said to get him a dog - it was crazy. He wouldn't tell them. So this is the guy who knows what it's like. He was way too young to be reading that book and it terrified him. So no we're not going to let our daughters fall prey to the same sort of syndrome, sweetie. I'm here, I'm the Mom and it's not going to happen.

TO BE CONTINUED IN DELIRIUM #3

DELIRIUM #2 25

The poster features a dark, atmospheric scene of a ghost ship at sea. In the background, a large, dark sailing ship with tattered sails looms on the horizon. In the foreground, several figures in dark, hooded robes with pale, skeletal faces stand in the water. Two large, detailed skulls with long, dark hair are prominently displayed in the lower center, appearing to float or be part of the scene. The overall color palette is dark, with blues, greys, and muted reds, creating a chilling and macabre mood.

Mitternacht:
Wenn im bleichen Licht des Vollmonds
die modrigen Kajütentürse
von Leichenhand geöffnet werden,
beginnt die neueste
Geisterfahrt des Horrors.

Jack Taylor
Maria Perschy
Carlos Lemos
Barbara Rey

Farbfilm

Das Geisterschiff der schwimmenden Leichen

«The Ghostship of the Blind Dead»

Regie: Amando Ossori

Produktion: Ancla Century Film/Reelife Productions

Verleih 

HIGHWAY TO HALL

Multi-hyphenate Kenneth J. Hall has had a long life in fear films.

By CHRIS ALEXANDER

Kenneth J. Hall can and has done it all. A monster kid born and raised, Hall wet his beak designing prosthetic special FX for Empire Pictures, Fred Olen Ray and Roger Corman before turning his talents to writing (his first credited screenplay is Olen Ray's 1986 Indiana Jones flavoured romp *THE TOMB*), eventually serving as co-writer and co-creator of Full Moon's most famous franchise kickstarter, 1989's *PUPPET MASTER*.

The past three decades have seen Hall dabble in every aspect of the film industry but these days, he primarily keeps busy with his company Total Fabrication Inc., an effects shop with a wide range of clients including building the new armour for rocker Gene Simmons for the last *KISS* "Monster" tour.

The tireless Hall took some time to get the full (moon) *DELIRIUM* treatment. Buckle in...

DELIRIUM: At what point did you realize that you could do it all and you wanted to do it all?

KENNETH J. HALL: Well I broke into the industry and I knew I would have to do it this way through special FX works which was booming back in the 80's. Movies like *THE THING* and *CAT PEOPLE* and *AN AMERICAN WEREWOLF IN LONDON* and *THE HOWLING*, those had all just recently come out. As a matter of fact my first job in Hollywood was on *SPACEHUNTER: ADVENTURES IN THE FORBIDDEN ZONE*...

DELIRIUM: And then you worked with



Fred Olen Ray...

HALL: I did. I did a monster suit for him and then I wrote a movie called *THE TOMB* for him

DELIRIUM: The monster suit was from *BIOHAZARD* is that right?

HALL: Yep. He was too cheap to hire a little person so he decided to stick his six year old son in a rubber suit. There was no money to do a body cast or anything so I literally foam fabricated the whole suit on this kid. The head was a sculpted piece but everything else was foam fabricated and really done by the seat of the pants. Apparently it took him so long to finish the movie that the kid outgrew the suit.

DELIRIUM: Obviously the template for *Biohazard* was Giger's *ALIEN* right?

HALL: Yeah. I mean obviously there had been other stuff like the Bill Malone *SCARED TO DEATH* film and other things, then *ALIEN* had certainly left an impression on everybody so the hope was to try to do something like that. I think I had like \$400 to make that suit so I can't be that proud of it (laughs). I also later on did a thing, actually my first directing gig, called *EVIL SPAWN* which had numerous other titles. It was intended originally to be a rip-off of the Corman's *THE WASP WOMAN* and I think Fred had actually had some kind of contact with Corman and then just decided to do it on his own and realized that Corman might go after him legally so all references to wasps were taken out of the final edit or something like that.

DELIRIUM: Wasn't *EVIL SPAWN* re-released years later in a different cut or as an extended cut or something?

HALL: What happened was, there were legal battles which I got sucked into. Apparently it got very ugly. Basically at one point, Fred decided to try to redo the movie and what he did was take my footage which had all the cool stuff, the naked women, the monsters, the gore, everything and of course the recognizable faces and my footage was shot in 16mm and then brought in Ted Newsom who is now a friend of mine to shoot new material on video tape and I've never seen the film all the way through but they took out certain characters and bits and inserted stuff shot on video into the film and those few bits and pieces I've seen of it, it doesn't match at all. I think that was called *THE ALIEN WITHIN* and IMDb still lists it as one of the alternate titles.

DELIRIUM: So you go from Fred to Charlie Band. Were those happier days?

HALL: Oh yeah. Frankly it was through Dave DeCoteau that I originally got involved over at Empire and I believe actually the first project I think Dave did talk to me about writing *I WAS A TEENAGE SEX MUTANT* for him which was the title for *DR. ALIEN* at the time, but it think there were some delays or something like that and in the meantime I had gotten to know him and gone down to the location and visited the set of *SORORITY BABES IN THE SLIMEBALL BOWL-O-RAMA* and met Linnea Quigley and so one night we were hanging out and he pitched the idea to me to do *NIGHTMARE SISTERS* and literally he said I want the three girls (Linnea, Michelle Bauer and Brinke Stevens) to be sorority girls who are possessed by a succubus and go around orally castrating frat boys and I said I've always considered oral castra-



tion to be a real knee-slapper so I thought that sounded like fun. I actually made Linnea's buck teeth as well as the fangs for all three girls. For the succubus itself when it appears at the end is actually a puppet I made for EVIL SPAWN so it was very seat of the pants. The movie was literally shot in four days on 35mm.

DELIRIUM: The 1980's were so much fun. At some point, mainstream horror got very dour...

HALL: It's odd because I remember when I first saw HENRY: PORTRAIT OF A SERIAL KILLER, which is a genuinely good film but it is pretty straightforward and documentary like and I remember posing to a number of filmmakers at the time, where is this going? Are you going to have somebody tied to a chair in a basement with a bare light bulb and minimal makeup effects act like you're torturing somebody and will you get a reaction from an audience? Of course you will. Will it be disturbing? Yes. But is it a movie? Is it film? Is it art?

DELIRIUM: I don't know how many times you've used pseudonyms in your work. The only one I can think of is Linnea's workout film. Why did you hide under a different name for that tone?

HALL: Again it was an unfortunate belief that when you do something that seems to be the next step up, you don't want to be perceived as making a step backwards and I had just done a movie that wound up becoming a syndicated TV movie, which is the only PG thing I've ever done, called GHOST WRITER. Literally the two adjectives that are most used to described it are cute and sweet which was very different for me at the time. I had just done that and then this came about as kind of a joke and then I thought Dave DeCoteau was interested in doing it so we did it. I just came up with the name Hal Kennedy

EVIL SPAWN

SPECIAL WIDE SCREEN EDITION

TONIGHT...SHE WILL LOVE AGAIN
-AND KILL AGAIN



and I used it again on another film, THE GIRL I WANT that was done a year or so later. That was a straightforward teen comedy and of course good old IMDb pierces all these pseudonyms whether you want them to or not and frankly I wanted to have probable deniability.

DELIRIUM: Tell me about your big break there. GHOST WRITER was an interesting deviation from your work and you thought maybe we'll go in this direction for a while and see what happens but PUPPET MASTER must have been a pretty big deal...

HALL: I was set to do a bunch of stuff at Empire Pictures when that all collapsed and then I know some of the films that were being done there including the one I'd written called DR. ALIEN had been some of the early test subjects at Paramount before there was actually a Full Moon label. I think it was called Phantom

EIGHTY EIGHT FILMS

GRINDHOUSE COLLECTION

BILLY JAYNE JUDY LANDERS OLIVIA BARASH



DR. ALIEN

She has the cure for growing pains...

DVD
VIDEO

18

LINNEA QUIGLEY'S
HORROR
WORKOUT

Video and so I knew there was something like that going on but then I hadn't heard from them in a while and when I heard from Debra Dion who was Charlie's wife at the time and the head of development, they had set themselves in some new offices and were calling themselves Band Company. So they called me in and Charlie did have a title and he did have a laundry list of puppets and I came up with the idea of making it a Satanic version of THE BIG CHILL where there was the group of people, and there was a missing member from this group and there was the heard it through the grapevine sequence at the opening of the film where they all get impressions that something has gone on with this person. In my draft, they were a contemporary band of witches, Satanists, occultists, whatever and then later on in the rewrites that I was not involved in, they became parapsychologists

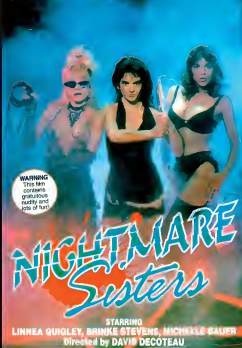
DELIRIUM: Was DEVIL DOLL at all an influence?

HALL: Not so much that. I worked on the

first two GHOULIES movies for Charlie and after that I did some stuff for DOLL-MAN VS. DEMONIC TOYS. I knew Charlie's penchant for little creatures. The way the puppets are described in my script, were somewhat different than they wound up looking. There was actually a character called Skull that wound up being replaced later on by Jester as the watcher character that never really did any mayhem. I've heard that Blade is supposed to be patterned on Klaus Kinski, basically that's what director David Schmoeller entertains because he worked with Kinski but I believe that Blade's appearance is very skull-like and that they decided to make in him the skull-like features. I believe the true credit for the success of that series does not go to me, to Charlie or to David Schmoeller, it goes to the late David Allen for designing the awesome puppets.

DELIRIUM: You mentioned Charlie's penchant for diminutive villains. Can you explain that love for small things in his movies?

HALL: It's really weird, it's never been a thing of mine however I personally have wound up working as I said not only on the GHOULIES and one of the DEMONIC TOYS sequels but I also worked outside of Full Moon as an FX artist on the original CRITTERS. I worked as a puppeteer on GREMLINS 2 and I built a puppet for an

SEX ISN'T THEIR
ONLY WEAPON...

incredibly low-budget film called HOB-GOBLINS which actually managed to make it to Mystery Science Theater so I wound up dealing with little creatures as a writer and as an FX artist so I'm very familiar with them and all I know is there was a period there where there was a huge interest in them. Actually again

being, loving the 80's and the whole retro thing, there are actually a couple of projects I'm working on right now where we might see a resurgence.

DELIRIUM: Outside of writing, directing, making cinema, you're still hard at work. You get your fingers in a lot of pies including working with KISS...

HALL: Gene is the only one who wears real armour. The rest of them, they've got some padded outfits and things like that but that's more wardrobe. We redid his old armour and we gave it a new look by giving it a chrome finish. Then a couple of



years ago we designed a whole new look for the armour. It has these organic horns or huge teeth coming out of it. It's got a little bit of a Giger influence; it's got more of an organic almost alien or almost prehistoric look to it though it still has the chrome finish on it. That particular instance we actually did design that in-house and fabricated the armour.

DELIRIUM: You always think of Gene as being the guy who's designing the stuff. Somebody told me that Paul Stanley has his hand a lot in it...

HALL: Costume designer Wendy Benbrook had her hand in it, Paul did make comments on things, I think Gene did make some comments on it and I had an artist working for me who added her aspect to it, so in this case it was collaborative. It was the first time in a few years that he had gone and decided to do something very different from the armour that everyone had come to recognize.

DELIRIUM: As a guy growing up with this stuff, I know you were a monster kid, you and your brother, FX legend Cleve Hall. Do you still consider yourself a lover of this stuff? Is it just a gig or is this stuff really hardwired into your DNA?

HALL: I would say the latter absolutely. Obviously my first love would be to be making my own films which I still plan to



do but even though Total Fabrication is technically my day job and of course there are a lot of times where it is not fun where you worry about making deadlines, covering the bills and that sort of thing. All of that can be daunting but when I look at it, especially on social media when I post photos of stuff we've done people are really enthusiastic about it and it confirms the fact that I'd certainly rather be doing this than some kind of regular day job. Every once in a while we get to do a cool creature or something that is really fun. I'll go home at night and watch an old monster film instead of a new release. I still have a great, great love for this stuff. A lot of my friends have similar likes and it's still a hobby, I'm still a fan but it's also nice to be making a living in an area that I love.

PAUL LE MAT
(AMERICAN GRAFFITI)

WILLIAM HICKEY
(PRIZZI'S HONOR)

CHARLES BAND'S

PUPPET MASTER

THE CLASSIC FIRST FILM



FOR THE FIRST TIME,
DIGITALLY RESTORED & REMASTERED
IN 16 X 9 WIDESCREEN

THE MYSTERY OF LASERBLAST

Cult bad boy Kevin Murphy once famously lambasted LASERBLAST

By **TREVOR PARKER**

This writer fondly remembers being enthralled as a youngster by Michael Rae's **LASERBLAST** (1978), digesting the film as a frightening fable on the burden of absolute power and the addictive qualities inherent to the abuse of such. Fast forward a decade, and this same writer cringed as **LASERBLAST** had its pants yanked down and flaws mercilessly (and hilariously) exposed when featured on the **MYSTERY SCIENCE THEATER 3000** television show. **LASERBLAST** may now carry a taint after its run through the **MST3K** meat grinder, but its showcase on the **Satellite Of Love** made for one of the most acute, cutting, and flat-out funniest of **MST3K**'s original episodes. **MST3K** may be long finished, but the brain trust behind it (writer/performers Mike Nelson, Bill Corbett, and Kevin Murphy) have continued to lambaste lousy films with smart-aleck interjections under the **Rifftrax** banner (and the **Rifftrax** on-demand streaming service, in which David Schmoeller's innocuous 1979 thriller **TOURIST TRAP** is dragged out and then drowned in **Rifftrax**'s signature sass). **DELIRIUM** recently had the chance to



chat with Mr. Murphy, who formerly voiced **MST3K**'s acerbic gumball machine Tom Servo, on the minutiae of mockery and more.

"**LASERBLAST** was bad in exactly the right kind of way for us," Murphy reminisces. "It was kind of like if **CHEVY VAN** had been made into an alien attack movie... and that's sort of how it turned out. You've got the blond Mark Hamill surfer **BIG WEDNESDAY** dude who goes through a **VIDEODROME** experience and ends up with an alien forehead—and those claymation aliens are just so great in the thing. It really had all the right elements for us to have fun with it at (**MST3K**). Plus the fact that Leonard Maltin had given it three stars, I think, (laughs) What the hell was he thinking? We kept going over his book and listing the films that have fewer stars than **LASERBLAST**, and it was an astounding list of really good films. When we started tweaking Maltin about that, that's actually when he became our pal, and he eventually ended up doing a cameo on the show."

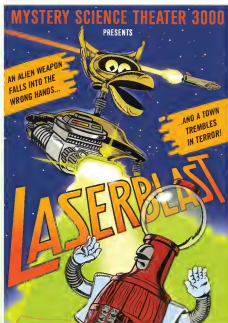
TOURIST TRAP was another meal too meaty for the Riffers to pass up ("The girls, the creepy loca-

tion, the faded matinee idol with Chuck Connors—"It was perfect for us," says Murphy), and Murphy confesses that there's one constituent of the Empire pictures empire that he still dreams of tackling. "I looked at the list of Band's films and it was just astonishing. The man is a machine, and he's still going! (laughs) I've wanted to do METALSTORM: THE DESTRUCTION OF JARED-SYN for years. We've made many, many references to it, just because of the name. Like BALLISTIC: ECKS VERSUS SEVER, it just has a name you want to make fun of." Still, don't look for a METALSTORM mauling from Murphy and company anytime soon. He explains, "It all comes down to, can we get the rights free and clear? The films we can't get rights to, we'll record mp3 commentaries and viewers can sync up their copies at home. With the films of Charles Band, no one really owns a copy; they just saw the movies on Cinemax or whatever. Also, a lot of the films that Band made would not be great for us because of disgusting violence or booby sex. We want this to be as family friendly as possible, which is why you won't see us doing BADASS MOTHERF--ER anytime soon!"

Now that Rifftrax's prospective dartboard has gotten much bigger through the abovementioned MP3 commentary

tracks, does Murphy find it more satisfying to toss his barbs at gigantic, soulless blockbusters as opposed to more modest opposition? "It depends on the film. So many of these Marvel movies just have these extended scenes of dialogue and then endless special-effects sequences. That's a little crazy-making for us. Action movies used to have Schwarzenegger-y clip lines and that was way more fun to deal with. That's why TWILIGHT has been such a success for us. No grown man would want to see these movies as is."

Finally, this writer has to take a moment to gush over Murphy's lovely singing voice, an asset used to great comedic effect throughout his MST3K and Rifftrax runs. To this, Murphy laughs. "My brothers and I did barbershop quartet and bluegrass music, so we've done harmonies all our lives," he says. "So (singing) is something I grew up with. And, I'm a big old ham, so it's a way for me to be a ham because then I'm louder than anyone in the room." But despite Murphy's buttery singing tone and dead-on song interpolations, he declares himself to be a lesser musical talent in the Rifftrax trio. "Mike is the one with more training between (the two of us), he can actually sight read. He can sit down and play (Beethoven's) 'The Waldstein' by



memory, and he plays it well. That's pretty impressive. So when it comes to any classical music, or The Cure, his knowledge comes in. I'll have come up with it if there's a joke about old, broken guys—The Zombies, or Eric Burdon and the Animals. That'll be mine!





Cindy Means from PMS COP

By CHRIS ALEXANDER

As we previewed in DELIRIUM #1, WIZARD Studios was formed by the Full Maan team as the successor to Charles Band's landmark genre film home video imprint WIZARD Video, an entity that thrived and broke rules in the early 1980's. WIZARD's new incarnation has the same spirit but now curates the finest in modestly budgeted, contemporary indie film entertainment and offers the titles on our streaming site with select films slated for DVD release later in the year.

And though we have a wild bunch of flicks so far in our coop - stuff like VAMPIRE, VIRGINIA OBSCURA and MEATEATERS - nothing thus far beats the buzz surrounding WIZARD's weirdest title yet: PMS COP!

Yes, PMS COP, the nane-too-tasteful handle for director Bryan Blakey's film about police corruption, urban rat and a pre-menstrual police officer (Heather Hall) who has had more than enough shenanigans and mutates into something manstrous: The PMS Cop! She's as mad as Hell and she's not going to take it anymore!

In honor of the hullabaloo surrounding the release of PMS COP, we pulled over the cop herself Cindy Means and subjected her to hat lights and full-blown Full Maan interrogation, all for your reading pleasure.

Why, look! Here comes our favorite flawing femme fatale now...

DELIRIUM: When did you jump on board this

production?

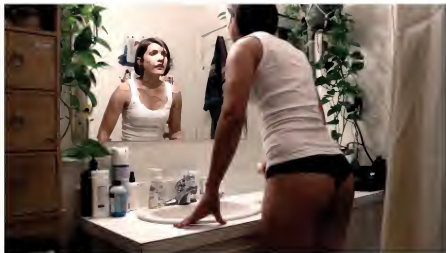
MEANS: I got involved a few months in, August of 2012. I didn't know the filmmakers, but we apparently had some mutual friends and were in the same local groups. That's how the director found my photos on Facebook and contacted me about the part. I'm not sure if it was a full-fledged audition. Bryan tells me he searched through a ton of photos to find the right person for the part and I was his first choice. I think it was mainly to meet me, get the gist of my acting, how I looked in costume - tall, looks menacing, check and check - and to see if I would be compatible with everyone.

DELIRIUM: Was the film always called PMS COP?

MEANS: Yes, it was always called PMS COP. Bryan got the inspiration from when he was pulled over for speeding by a cranky police-woman back in the day.

DELIRIUM: With a title like that it would have





been easy for you to coast and yet you give a real performance. What are your thoughts on the character and how did you find her humanity?

MEANS: Thank you. I've had very little acting experience and no training, so I relied on my imagination and horror fan-girl-ness to get into the role. I think the character is misunderstood above anything else. It's called PMS COP and there's a lot of comedy and a good amount of gore and fun, but there's also the story of a young female cop who suffered abuse as a child and that is getting pigeonholed by the men around her, blaming everything on her PMS. She was angry, defensive and probably very sad and isolated. So, I tried to keep that in mind when I became her mutated, super powered doppelganger on a murderous rampage (laughs).

DELIRIUM: The film is a blast...was it a blast to make?

MEANS: Yes! I had a crazy amount of fun making this movie. I didn't want it to end to be honest. It was a good mixture of professionalism even with the micro budget laid back attitude and silliness.

DELIRIUM: What does your family think of PMS

COP?

MEANS: They're supportive and excited for me but they're not into horror at all, so most of it is totally lost on them. Plus, they're states away and I'm keeping them up to date via email, so no matter how many exclamation points I use I

can't truly express my excitement. My friends and boyfriend are my extended family, and they're all into it and rooting me and the movie on. So far, just about everyone I know first laughs at the title/plot, but then is intrigued and wants to watch it.

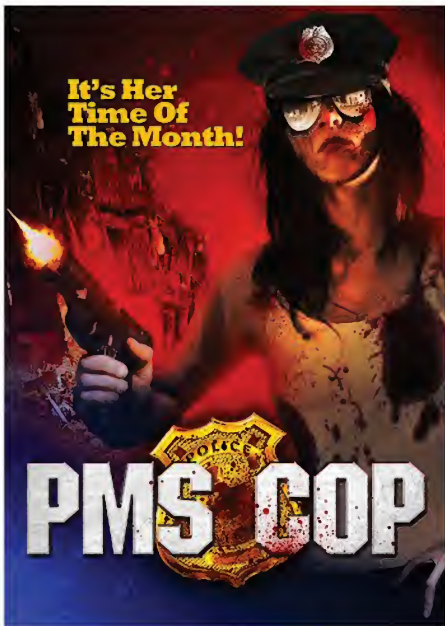
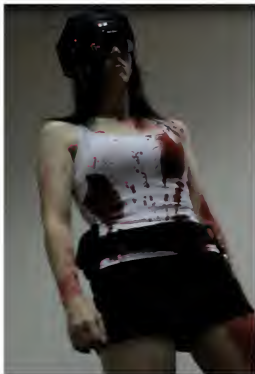
DELIRIUM: After WIZARD picked it up, there seems to be a real buzz swelling around the film. Are you in talks for PMS COP II?

MEANS: I would be more than down to do a sequel if and when they do one. Right now, there are no plans for a sequel though, but I hear there are some wild things in store for the near future.

DELIRIUM: What's your favorite badass cop flick? Who is your favorite female action heroine?

MEANS: My favorite badass cop flick is probably TERMINATOR 2. Robert Patrick's T-1000 was one of my inspirations for playing the PMS COP. I have a few favorite female action heroines, but I'd say my very favorite is Eowyn from LORD OF THE RINGS. She wasn't an in-your-face badass, but I liked her stoic bravery. Plus, she destroyed the Witch King, you can't get much more metal than that.

Watch PMS COP now at www.FullMoonStreaming.com/wizard



MIDNIGHT MOVIE MASTER

How Greg Sestero went from Full Moon to THE ROOM.

By KEN W. HANLEY

Throughout the cavalcade of cult hits that he's produced over the years, it's well documented, often in the pages of this very periodical, that Charles Band has helped make the names of some of Hollywood's most prolific people. Filmmakers such as Stuart Gordon and David S. Goyer got their big breaks working on Band productions, and it's possible that the world would have waited much longer to learn of the many talents possessed by Jeffrey Combs and Barbara Crampton had it not been for Empire Pictures. However, no Band discovery is as curious as that of Greg Sestero, a fresh-faced actor who had his first leading role as the young Andre Toulon in 1999's RETRO PUPPET MASTER.

For those unfamiliar with the name Greg Sestero, you may be familiar with the character he'll always be associated with, the philandering 'Mark' in Tommy Wiseau's cult phenomenon THE ROOM. Last year marked the tenth anniversary of THE ROOM's release and its rise from odd and obscure curiosity to a full blown midnight movie obsession is nothing short of incredible. Meanwhile, Sestero has been along for the ride, turning up at many screenings of the film, interacting with fans and, most recently, releasing a book on its tumultuous production entitled The Disaster Artist.

Nevertheless, even in The Disaster

Artist, Sestero gives credit where credit is due, recalling his very first major film role in great detail. A young, hungry actor up for potentially career-making roles at every turn, Sestero saw the opportunity in the underground cult franchise and took it. Yet the actor was still entering RETRO PUPPET MASTER semi-blind, hoping his open mind and eagerness would get him through his freshman independent production.

"I auditioned for a few horror movies, like JEEPERS CREEPERS and I'm definitely a fan of them," says Sestero. "I think RETRO PUPPET MASTER is, in its own way, a pretty good horror movie. I definitely tried harder on this film than, say, what I did in THE ROOM. I approached the film respectfully and gave it my all. I had reasonable expectations for RETRO PUPPET MASTER and wanted to be able to practice my craft. I'm still grateful for that opportunity."

"I wasn't familiar (with Full Moon Features)," Sestero continues, "But I'd become quickly familiar with the movies once I'd gotten the part. I did some research and watched CURSE OF THE PUPPET MASTER, and I had also been briefed before filming. I loved indie, quirky horror movies, and the fact that we were shooting the film in Romania made it even more exciting. I was definitely excited to take part in the film, especially



as it was my first speaking part ever in a movie, and I was thrown in as the lead. It was a challenge, but I enjoyed it."

Of course, to PUPPET MASTER fans, Andre Toulon is a pivotal figure in the series' mythology, essentially serving as the catalyst for the mayhem that ensues throughout the franchise. He's a complex character, often well-meaning even though his killer creations paint him as occasionally antagonistic. Sestero, however, saw the character through his own eyes, adding his own natural charm and glowing innocence to the role to offer audiences a different side of Toulon than seen before.

"I had learned the character of Andre Toulon had gone a little darker later in the series," recalls Sestero. "But because RETRO PUPPET MASTER was a prequel, I was able to play a young version of him as naive and more earnest in his attempts to become this French puppeteer. I guess it fit me, in a sense, since I had pretty much thought to play it straight and not really show that darker side to him."

Indeed, Sestero's performance is definitely benefitted by the location of the film within the PUPPET MASTER continuity, allowing audiences to see a desirable, overwhelmed Toulon as the forces of the supernatural pervade his life and change his path. RETRO PUPPET MASTER also gave Sestero a chance to deliver a performance that wasn't strictly indicative to the later-aged Toulon, memorably portrayed by William Hickey, Steve Welles and Guy Rolfe, the latter whom bookends RETRO PUPPET MASTER in his final appearance in the franchise. However, Sestero didn't outright ignore the contributions of his predecessors, having spoken to Rolfe himself on the set of the film.

"Well, they brought Guy Rolfe back for RETRO PUPPET MASTER specifically, so I got to talk to him for a short amount of time," adds Sestero. "He was a very nice, talented actor, and he didn't really point out what I should or shouldn't be doing. It was good to talk to him, meet him and watch him act. He gave me a little bit more guidance."



Considering the impact that Rolfe's contributions left on the PUPPET MASTER films, it's somewhat strange that Sestero was never tapped to reprise the role. Whereas the franchise dipped further into the stories of the Toulon name-sake and his devious puppets, the stories of young Andre Toulon were left in the hands of the other films through exposition and plot development. Perhaps tales of the younger Toulon as he became more corrupted by his creations would have been darker than Sestero's performance may have insinuated, but that doesn't change the fact that the actor would have been game for another chance to become the PUPPET MASTER.

"I actually really enjoyed playing Andre Toulon and I would have definitely been interested," proclaims Sestero. "But obviously, they've released a few PUPPET MASTER films since, so I don't think I would be able to do one in the near future. But I think that the series is fun, and back then, I definitely would have been open to returning."

Sestero's presence and physicality wasn't the only special addition he had for



his Toulon performance, as he brought in his naturally adept French accent to the ethnically-accurate French character. Having grown up with a French-speaking mother and having the culture within his own bloodline, Sestero recaps in *The Disaster Artist* how he thought to use the uncommonly-portrayed accent for the role, which he believes was essential to his casting considering it went against the commonplace British accent most attributed to period pieces.

"That accent was definitely attractive for the producers, as they could cast the French puppeteer with someone who had a French accent," Sestero elaborates. "It was a benefit to me, and I also think that French accents aren't that common in movies. I think everyone was cool with it."

For his first starring role, Sestero did have an exceptional and unique experience on *RETRO PUPPET MASTER*. The film, which was shot primarily in Romania, which gives the film its period look and setting, and despite the film's low budget, Sestero was struck by the authenticity of the shoot, no matter how unbe-

lievable his shooting situations may be. In fact, there was one particular strange moment from his Full Moon shoot that Sestero won't soon forget.

"I remember one time, we were shooting in the dead of winter, and we were outside at this real train station trying to get a shot of Andre Toulon getting on a train," Sestero muses. "Then, a real train pulled up with real passengers and we just used it. I actually got on the train with these passengers and boarded it while they filmed the scene to get the shot. I thought that was pretty funny that these passengers were just on a train, got to their stop and suddenly, this guy is getting on with a film camera and they're filming a movie. Getting to go up to the Transylvanian Alps was really cool as well. Overall, it was a lot of fun to film in this other country, and I think that [the location] added a lot to the film."

Still, it's strange how an actor can coincidentally travel from one cult film to an even bigger cult film, especially as the latter has brought even more attention to the former. In a business where an actor is





lucky to find his fifteen minutes of fame, Sestero has found himself in an odd grey area of celebrity, as he's too humble to be a D-level celebrity yet too content to stride into the next phase of cult notoriety. However, when it comes to the midnight fare that has defined his career, Sestero is

willing to draw a line between low-rent but imaginative puppet horror and monstrously bad but ultimately captivating melodrama.

"RETRO PUPPET MASTER was something I considered more of a legitimate production since I had to be cast in

the film and people who had worked on that movie had worked on other projects," offers Sestero. "In hindsight, RETRO PUPPET MASTER shows its budget when you watch it, but I had a greater sense of what I was doing on that film and tried to enjoy the experience of making it. I didn't expect much from the film, but I will say that in both RETRO and THE ROOM, there is some glaring ADR on display."

Now a published author, Sestero's future may not be as clear as his past, but he shows no shame in his work, no matter how far down the rabbit hole it may go. But in the age of digital distribution, there may be a chance of RETRO PUPPET MASTER reaching more horror fans than ever, especially ones who would recognize Sestero from his cult infamy.

"Maybe RETRO PUPPET MASTER will be rediscovered a little bit, since it's got kind of a limited reach in terms of general fan base. I'm not sure if the younger audiences today will embrace it, but you never know," laments Sestero. "But I have been approached with RETRO PUPPET MASTER merchandise at screenings of THE ROOM. Actually, it happens quite often. I can't believe that these two films have had this cult afterlife. I wonder what it'd be like to be in a movie that just got released in theaters, did its thing and moved on. I seem to have trouble finding one of those."



MEMOIRS OF A PUPPET MASTER

By DAVID DeCOTEAU

I'm sitting on a crane in the Warner Bros. backlot, New York street with rain towers pouring, with stars Ron Silver, Christopher Plummer and James Coburn. I've been hired to direct SKELETONS financed by the "Wolf of Wall Street" himself, Jordan Belfort. This is my biggest budgeted movie to date. I'm just a white trash boy from Portland, Oregon who worked his way through the B movie netherworld of junk horror, naked women and car crashes. Now I am a serious filmmaker with an A list cast and a newly minted member of the Directors Guild of America! It's only up from here, I say...

Well, Jordan Belfort gets arrested and I COULDN'T get arrested! So I call my friend Charlie Band and beg him for a job. Charlie does for me what he has always done for me: he rescues me. "Dude! Get over to my new offices on Hollywood and Vine. I've taken over the top floor of the Broadway building, Howard Hughes' old residence! I need to make a slate of PG-13 movies with my old friend Peter Locke for a new Satellite service in Latin America. They need to be family friendly!"

So, the script for RETRO PUPPET-MASTER was waiting for me at Charlie's new digs as was my new office with a view of the Hollywood Sign. I read the script and loved it. A period thriller set in Paris circa 1890. No blood? Cool! This will be my Merchant Ivory Tea Cup horror flick. Casting began that week. Peter Locke assigned a "production executive" to oversee the casting. I can't remember her name. She hated me, I hated her. It was a match made in hell. A tall, gangly, bushy-haired and gorgeous young man came in to read. He had the voice of a SoCal surfer so I asked him to read the scene again this time with a French accent. He said "gimme a couple minutes." He left the room and came back in a few minutes and auditioned again with a flawless French accent. Charlie and I looked at each other and smiled. We had our boy...

"If you squint he looks like a very young Guy Rolfe" said Charlie. My plane left for Romania just two days later. I had worked at Charlie's Transylvania Studio before. I was always given the shortest schedules because Charlie felt that what I lacked in talent I made up for in efficiency. The routine was simple. I arrived at Otopeni Airport in Snagov, Romania with 30,000 feet of 35mm negative and a satchel full of cash. 3 drivers were waiting. One got the film, one got the cash (he was always in a hurry) and

one got me. Charlie was always kind enough to give me his driver "Mugur" and his Mercedes. We would stop at Castel Studios on the way to the hotel so I can take a look at the sets from the previous "big budget" production that just wrapped. (Charlie always rented out his Studio facility to big budget Studio movies during the warmer climate of summer and then make his own movies in the winter on the same sets).

The next day the cast arrived. Briggita Dau was in my SKELETONS movie and is incredible. The electrifying Stephen Blakehart, the incomparable Jack Donner (who was once Jack Nicholson's acting teacher) and the handsome Greg Sestero arrived at the studio for costume fittings. Greg greeted me with a smile. I said "Honey, we gotta do something with that big blond bouffant of yours! You have big hair!" Greg belly-laughed and I knew this 20 year old had the sense of humor of someone much older than him. The set costumer HILDA was a friend from my first movie in Romania back in 1994 called LURID

TALES: THE CASTLE QUEEN. She didn't speak a word of English but I adored her and called her my Romanian wife which the crew loved. Via a translator "Hilda, I want Greg to look like a young Lib-erace!" She smiled. It

took 2 seconds for Hilda to know what kind of movie I was making. That smile of hers. I miss her so much.

Considering it was a VERY tough winter with extremely challenging logistics we were moving quick and I reported to Charlie every night about the day's work. I was very happy. The only problem on the shoot was an odd, creepy dwarf-like female crew member with Russian Bleached blonde hair that looked like a feathered cherri Cafaro do circa 1971. She wouldn't take her eyes off Greg for the entire shoot. One day we found her laying on the bed in Greg's dressing room. I complained to the production manager.

"Would you fire her or put her on one of those fancy big-budget Ted Nicolaou movies you are making down the street?"

"Mr. Daveed, if we fire her, her family will starve".

Oy! Greg pulled his director's chair next to mine on set and never left my side. This freaky chick right out of a David Lynch TV series spooked even me!

Greg has since worked with me on ALIEN PRESENCE and PIT AND THE PENDULUM. One night at dinner he said, "Hey Dave, I just did a movie called THE ROOM and it seems to be getting a lot of attention". I had not even heard of this movie. "Yeah, it's like THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW, the audience makes comments while watching it." I said "Hmmmmmm...I'll have to check it out."

I still haven't seen THE ROOM but it seems everyone else has!

David DeCoteau has directed 127 movies many of which for Charles Band. He now heads up his own company, Rapid Heart Pictures.



BRING ME THE HEAD OF STUART GORDON!

TRUE TALES FROM THE MASTER OF HORROR

THE SKLEEKs BELONG TO THE PLEEPLES

PART TWO

By STUART GORDON

December 8th 1971:

We began pre-views of our new comic book inspired play WARP and were soon surprised that the audience found our show hysterically funny. What we had embraced with the almost religious fervor of the acid trip that had inspired it all, our initial audiences were finding ludicrous. We decided to play into this and the actors improvised some line changes that were quickly incorporated into the script. Actor Richard Fire made the ancient seer Lugulbanda



absent minded, the idea being that he knows so much that he has forgotten half of it:

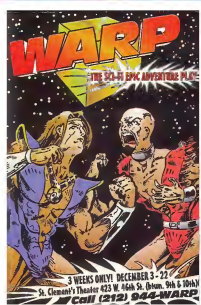
"There is a force extant in this dimension, and soon, I fear, in others," Lugulbanda tells the skeptical bank teller David Carson.

"A force which is the embodiment of the most savage intellect in the history of the conscious mind. A force so terrible and vast

that it can vaporize an entire galaxy on a whim! This force calls himself... (long pause) wait, don't tell me... Chaos! Chaos, Prince of Madness."

Like Marvel, we gave our characters quirks, as well as senses of humor. This allowed the audience to laugh but also enjoy the super-powered heroics; the most prominent one being the mind blast, a bolt of energy that Lord Cumulus could throw by cocking his head and sending it flying at an opponent to the accompaniment of a strobe flash and an explosion created by my brother David on his microphone. Like one of the WARP superheroes, David soon changed his name to Flying Frog and as he was responsible for creating some of the weird props needed for our show, he built himself a helmet with frog eyes and large golden wings which made him look like the god mercury if he had been gene-spliced to a toad.

WARP, which we billed as "The World's First Epic Adventure Play in Serial Form" opened at the Body Politic Theater in Chicago in early December and became our biggest hit ever. We packed in audiences who came to see the show repeatedly. During the day writer Lenny Kleinfeld and I worked on the next episode, which went much quicker as we now knew our characters and could play to the strengths



of our company.

Episode Two, "Unleashed! Unchained!" opened in March of 1972 and the two episodes ran in rotating rep with both one and two playing on Saturday nights. We found that many audience members bought tickets to both shows and made it a four-hour evening at our theater. WARP was sold out for weeks in advance.

Remember this was five years before the creation of STAR WARS (more about that later) and audiences loved the science fiction world and its unforgettable characters that was being created onstage before their eyes. The actors were getting recognized on the streets, "Aren't you Lord Cumulus?" We felt like we truly were walking like gods.

The third episode needed to be the best of the bunch and we worked long and hard on the script. Most Marvel comics use a formula in which the vanquished villain turns out to be the servant of an even more powerful super villain who shows up in the next issue, and we decided to take this idea to its ultimate conclusion. Episode Three would be a picaresque, a journey our two superhero brothers make together to find their father, He Who Dreams, the ultimate power in the universe (God.) But finding him would be tricky with them landing in other dimensions and meeting other foes along the way.

This meant that each of these other dimensions would need to be brought to life with elaborate costumes and props and even more impressive effects. Thanks

to the success of the first two episodes, we now actually had money and could afford a real budget for WARP 3. We hired Stuart Iverson, the talented designer of the very gay Godzilla Rainbow Company, to help create the many elaborate costumes.

Many of the actors in an effort to sport heavily muscled physiques like the comic book heroes began to work out on a



weight bench that was kept back stage at the Body Politic. They pored over body building magazines that featured Mister Universe, the then unknown Arnold Schwarzenegger (we thought his name was so funny that we named a character in the show after him) and oiled themselves with a mixture of baby oil and iodine. And of course they tried to top each other with the huge amounts of weight they were able to press, to the point that one black day our leading man Cecil O'Neal pulled his back.

That night Bill Norris (looking like Woody Allen) gamely put on Lord Cumulus' superhero costume and Lenny replaced Bill as Symax. But it was clear from the subdued audience reaction and Cecil's doctor, who told us the next day that his patient would need months to recover, that we had to face the music and find another actor to replace him. This was especially hard for me as Cecil (along with my wife Carolyn and me) was the only other company member who had been with us from the very beginning when we moved to Chicago to start the theater three years before.

Lady LUCK

By JASON BENE



There are stars that don't display an ounce of arrogance and never take their celebrity status for granted. Take multi-hyphenate model/actress and **UNLUCKY CHARMS** co-star Masumi Max for example. She is as down to Earth as they come, a sweetheart who has attained incredible popularity without forgetting who made it all possible: her fans.

DELIRIUM took a few moments to meet Miss Max and we're glad we did...

DELIRIUM: You are one of the top burlesque performers on the planet, you run a

few websites, you model, and now you have a makeup company. You are one busy lady!

MASUMI MAX: Aw, thank you! Yup, I started "I Am Sin" last year! I even created the website, which features a list of stores that carry "I Am Sin", a "Get the Look" section that features videos and photos of different models. I had Anna Berghund from **UNLUCKY CHARMS** model for the line!

DELIRIUM: I can't place it for the life of me, but the house where you filmed **UNLUCKY CHARMS** looks awfully famil-



iar to me.

MAX: It was a castle in the Hollywood Hills with an actual moat!

DELIRIUM: The writer of the picture, Kent Roubush, told me you were a total professional on set and a joy to work with...

MAX: Good, I won't have to kick him. (laughs). I hope he knows I'm kidding.

DELIRIUM: What is your opinion of actresses who are uncomfortable getting in their birthday suit on-camera?

MAX: I think they should do what they want and are comfortable with. No one should ever do nudity if they are uncomfortable. It's your life, you're your own





god. For me, the advice to picture the audience naked when nervous, doesn't work when you are naked yourself (laughs). But once you've been naked on stage, it's a little easier to be natural in front of a camera.

DELIRIUM: What are some of your favorite horror films?

MAX: Most of my favorite horror films would be the ones I watched when I was a kid. Things were much scarier then and I had an overactive imagination and thought a lot of it was real, which is why I like movie sets. I get to see how things are done and pieced together, which really helped with being scared of scary movies. Now when I watch a scary film I'm like, aw, that is a lot of fake blood to clean up. Anyway, **PUPPET MASTER** scared the pants off of me. I always thought things were moving in my room after I saw this film. **THE EXORCIST**. The bit where the girl crab walks down the stairs made me pee everywhere. I know, I know, not a horror film, but **TIME BANDITS** scared me! I always had an issue with closets and mirrors, always afraid something would come out or I would get sucked in. After this film I had to sleep with all the lights on, all the time. I'd probably say that **PSYCHO** is my



least favorite horror film because to this day if I am home alone I will bring a weapon into the shower with me, just in case (laughs). **PERFUME**. I don't consider this a horror film, but it's categorized as one. I know, he's a serial killer, but the way the story is written allows you to see how he became that way. In a lot of slasher films I am usually analyzing the character and wondering if real killers would make the same decisions if they were brought up differently or by different people. Too busy analyzing to be scared and I'm usually in tears by the end of movies like this because I feel so sad for something I think could have been prevented...

DELIRIUM: How can fans go about keeping tabs on your career?

MAX: My main website is www.IAmTrouble.com. That is where you will find all the info you need, a calendar, diary and over 45,000 photos and videos. You can even translate the site in 35 languages, instant message with videochat and videochat room. My Facebook is another great place to keep up with me: <https://www.facebook.com/Official.Masumi.Max> + Twitter <https://twitter.com/masumimax> and Instagram.



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THE VAULT

By DAVE JAY



THE LOST LOVECRAFT: A LURKING FEAR RETROSPECTIVE



For many decades, the town of Leferts Corners has been plagued by the inbred, cannibalistic Martense clan. Few inhabitants remain alive, and so they gather at the town's place of worship in order to plan a final showdown. But when recently released jailbird John Martense unexpectedly arrives on the scene to claim his family inheritance with small-time hoods in pursuit, Leferts' residents suddenly find themselves locked in a bloody battle with monsters and mobsters...

As with Herbert West - Re-animator before it, H.P. Lovecraft's chilling short tale *The Lurking Fear* was first released

as a serial in pulp-fiction magazine *Home Brew*. Published in 1923, it would also become the subject of a somewhat less-than-faithful Charlie Band adaptation a full seven decades later. Lovecraft's story had, of course, previously existed as an enticingly airbrushed 'coming attraction' poster for Empire Pictures as far back as 1986, when director Stuart Gordon penciled in *Lurking Fear* as a possible further addition to his series of Lovecraft yucks, tits 'n' slime flicks, although that work-in-progress is almost impossible to recognize when compared to the one that finally hit the small screen.

Gordon, alongside regular scribe Dennis Paoli, was to have used the 'Arthur Munroe' character as his jumping-off point (Munroe, in Lovecraft's slight tale, being a reporter who travels to the cursed Leferts Corners to cover the story), changing the sex of the correspondent to accommodate Barbara Crampton and imbuing his tale with the feel of a '30s/'40s screwball 'press' flick in the vein of Howard Hawks' *His Girl Friday*, an approach later appropriated by the Coen Brothers for *The Hudsucker Proxy*. As Gordon explains, "Dennis and I had the



idea that this was gonna take place in the period and Lovecraft was actually gonna be a character in the story: it's his only story where the main character is a writer of strange tales. And the film begins with an entire town having been wiped out, but what happened to the bodies? There's blood and there's carnage but they can't find any complete bodies. And Lovecraft is intrigued by this and so goes out to investigate it. We were going to have Barbara Crampton play a woman reporter and the two of them were gonna end up joining forces and getting into the whole thing, following the Lovecraft story."

Unfortunately, Gordon and Paoli's



plans were swiftly put on the backburner after the collapse of Band's Empire in 1988. Cut to 1994 and enter writer/director C. Courtney Joyner: chief scribe at Charlie's ever-expanding Full Moon Entertainment and fresh off the fair suc-

cess of Trancers III. Having gathered dust on the shelf for half a decade, Courtney was drafted in to revive Lurking Fear and determined to make the long-gestating project a "tough crime movie with horror overtones". Joyner was and is a long-time admirer of exploitation cinema, having been an extra on many a Charles Bronson revenge pic in his college days, during which he hooked up with burgeoning director Jeff Burr. Following his education, Joyner briefly became a protégé of veteran television director, Virgil Vogel (The Mole People) until, in 1986, he and Burr bravely decided to strike out on their own, self-financing the underrated horror anthology *From a Whisper to a Scream*, which in turn led to Joyner penning Empire Pictures' supernatural chiller *Prison*, not to mention uncredited work on *Catacombs* and whole slew of unproduced Empire projects (Danny Steinmann's *Subterraneans* and Jeff Burr's *The Vault* among them).

Imbued with confidence from his well-received directorial debut, Courtney set about creating "The Long Good Friday meets *The Zombies!*" A 'Mobsters vs. Monsters' concept not dissimilar to Clive Barker's initial draft for Empire's subsequently botched *Transmutations*. "The saga of *The Lurking Fear* began innocently enough in Charlie's office," recalls Joyner. "The company was pretty happy with *Trancers III* and Charlie wanted to know what project I wanted to tackle next as both writer and director. *Lurking Fear* had been discussed with Stuart Gordon (naturally), but I don't think a script was ever developed. I had read in an interview that Stuart wanted to do the film in the style of a '30s Warner Brothers newspaper flick, with Barbara Crampton playing a wisecracking reporter. I didn't know how that was going to mesh with Lovecraft, but when I heard about Stuart's approach it got me to thinking that it was okay to go beyond H.P.'s story when I was trying to come up with my own adaptation. My main concern was always keeping the atmosphere of Lovecraft and have the tone be faithful to his writing, even if the plot of the screenplay was not. But, of



course, there were problems!

I have a good friend named Brian Taggart who wrote a flick called *Of Unknown Origin*, about a rat that terrorizes Peter Weller. I really liked that concept and thought that *Lurking Fear* might work along those lines – essentially a one man piece, with a first person narrative, about a character facing his deepest terrors; something very much in keeping with the story. I couldn't pull it off. I tried a lot of different ways – and kept going back to the very slim, original story – not much dramatic meat there; you had to invent a

great deal but I couldn't get a grasp on it. I had a great meeting with Stuart Gordon and he was very generous in tossing ideas back and forth with me, but when I got back to the typewriter I kept hitting the same walls. The story needed to be expanded but the ways I was trying just didn't work. And I still wanted it to be basically a single character piece. I had lunch with Jeff Combs (who was a great supporter and who I very much wanted to star) and he said he "didn't want to play a character that washes his hands every five minutes." In other words, no more horror eccentrics! I was already having a hell of a time with this thing and then Jeff's feelings only solidified my notion to begin again. I admit I needed very little prodding to throw away everything I'd done – so I started over and went down a path I now regret."

Joyner has since gone on record as considering his own take on *Lurking Fear* to be a failed Lovecraft adaptation, though this is more than a little harsh as there is much more to recommend in Full Moon's version than the likes of 1989's *Dark Heritage* (David McCormick's own inadequate, uncredited take on Lovecraft's *Lurking Fear* tale). In terms of pure Lovecraft, Joyner's movie might indeed be considered a failure (on those strict terms, so might Gordon's own *Re-Animator* or *From Beyond*). But viewed simply as a straight-





up, old school, backwater horror flick – carrying, as it does, a similar ambience to '80s-era John Carpenter classics such as *The Fog* and *Prince of Darkness* – *Lurking Fear* makes for an involving, late night beer 'n' pretzels potboiler. Much of the film's agreeably oppressive atmosphere might perhaps be attributed to the genuinely deserted backwater that Joyner wisely used as his canvas.

"At the time *Lurking Fear* was being prepped and started, Charlie was building a new studio in Romania and they were breaking ground for it, so we actually shot at Buftea Studios. It was a ramshackle place, built for the Communist-run television stations. It had huge, marble studios and management buildings and a back lot that was falling down. There were wild horses on the lot that would stampeede through the shots sometimes and roving packs of dogs. Very atmospheric. I really loved it but we were using practical back lot sets for the town, they were rotting and falling down and were dangerous to shoot in. The safest set was the one we used for the funeral parlor, even though when I first looked at it, the floor gave way under my feet! One great thing is that the back lot town was going to be demolished, so I got permission to blow it up instead and that gave us a bigger ending for the flick than we had envisioned. You could do that at Full Moon – pull a suggestion out of your hat and if it struck Charlie right, then you did it. I was lucky because this struck Charlie right. The church was actually in ruins and the art director and his crew rebuilt the place, creating the cemetery from scratch. It was incredible. The Romanian crew was great and they did so much with so little, it was a real lesson in humility watching them work. Sometimes I felt very spoiled. I can't say enough good things about the work they did on such a small budget and with such limited resources."

Also vital to whatever relative heights that *Lurking Fear* hits during its running time is the simply cracking cast assembled for the film: alongside instantly recognizable genre icons such as *Hellraiser*'s Ashley Laurence, *Re-Animator*'s Jeffrey Combs and *Ghost*'s Vincent Schiavelli, you'll find William Girdler regular Paul Mantee (*Day of the Animals*) as the devoted but ineffectual Father Poole, and

directors and they understand budgets and what "name value" really means. I ended up with a wonderful "name" cast for my film and Charlie approved it. I got the people I wanted, including my cousin Allison Mackie who I thought did a great job. But there was the issue of my bad guy.

I really wanted to do something with one of the great English icons – Oliver Reed or Christopher Lee – but they were too expensive and had worked with Charlie before, so I started to think along the lines of the great guys like Barry Foster and Jon Finch and David Hemmings. Amazingly, all three of them read the script and said yes. Barry Foster had to drop out right away because of illness so we never made our offer, but both Hemmings and Finch were willing. I remember sitting with Jeff Burr in the Full Moon parking lot, talking over my incredible good fortune. I was very excited but Jeff and I both thought that since David Hemmings had directed so much TV, he might be inclined to try and take over the movie. I agreed completely – if only I knew! – and decided to go with Jon, who I thought was tremendous in *Frenzy* and *Macbeth*, plus all his cool Hammer credits. Now I had a great cast: Ashley Laurence, Vincent Schiavelli, Jon Finch, Joe Leavengood, Blake Bailey and the terrific Paul Mantee, with whom I became great friends. I had planned on also using Stephen Macht (another great guy) since he was already in Romania shooting a *Trancers* sequel



central baddie Bennett played by celebrated British actor Jon Finch, famous for his early appearances in Polanski's bloody Shakespeare adaptation *The Tragedy of Macbeth* and Hitchcock's equally brutal return-to-form *Frenzy*. As Joyner tells it, "The casting of the film was a dream. Bob MacDonald and Perry Bullington deserve huge points for the actors they brought to Full Moon productions. They were really terrific casting

but Charlie called me and told me that Jeff Combs was going to be my Dr. Haggis! That was Charlie's gift to the movie. Now I was super-thrilled because I was going to make an H.P. Lovecraft movie with Jeff Combs!

Just before we started principal photography, I was very up. Charlie was in Bucharest and we went out to dinner. He took me aside and told me that I had gotten my cast, a great DP (Adolfo Bartoli)

and fabulous sets. His words of advice were, "Don't fuck it up." I laughed when I probably should have listened. Part of the problem was Jon Finch. Now I cannot fault Jon's work. He knew his lines, delivered them well and did a fine job when called upon. But I felt no rapport with him and he didn't want it anyway. I had one great night with him talking about Hitchcock and I felt we had made a real connection. But the next day was a nightmare, with Jon beating the hell out of every suggestion or direction and making life pretty miserable for me. Jon was unhappy with me and, as a result, could be very difficult with the crew. Challenging me was a part of his process and I folded in front of him, which was a huge mistake."

Though a nightmare to be around on set, Finch does provide the film with its ripest, most playful performance, treading just the right side of caricature (even if his accent does sometimes stray dangerously close to sounding like a close relative of Ralph Brown's Danny from *Withnail & I*). Most bizarrely, a small selection of Finch's lines appear to have been looped in post-production by a none-too-convincing soundalike, apparently due to Finch's inability to fly over to Full Moon's stateside HQ following the Lurking Fear shoot. Despite such actor-director tensions, Joyner does a very nice job when tackling character-driven scenes and the initial, fleeting shots of the monstrous Martense family surreptitiously observing their human prey. And certain isolated sequences – such as when the righteous Father Poole sacrifices himself to the head of Lefferts Corners' cannibalistic clan – wield an undeniable power. But Lurking Fear's principal problems stem from the fact that Joyner mishandles a few of the movie's out-and-out action scenes, not to mention Finch's blink-and-you'll-miss-it death scene. And as a whole, the film's story arc requires far more clarification than is given, as seemingly important plot points are occasionally skimmed over in the loosest of fashions, most noticeably in the vague portrayal of the hideous Martense household itself, which doesn't even start to fully exploit the themes of inbreeding and degeneration that were so prevalent in Lovecraft's original story.

It is here that Joyner perhaps missed his chance to create a well-rounded, conceptually more challenging movie, featuring foes not unlike those portrayed in Gary Sherman's 1972 British horror classic *Death Line* AKA *Raw Meat*. By making his monsters' wretched plight symbolic of – indeed, a direct result of – man's inhumanity to man, director Sherman rendered a remarkably comparable cannibalistic clan simultaneously horrific and sympathetic, in turn making for a dramatically more satisfying whole (Stuart Gordon's subsequent *Full Moon* effort *Castle Freak* – itself a loose adaptation of Lovecraft's *The Outsider* – pulled off a similar trick with equal aplomb). But John



Martense's kindred are instead used as grotesque window dressing; the audience learns little of their decades spent feeding off the town's inhabitants, their dysfunctional family set-up or, indeed, why it has taken a full two decades for the inhabitants of Lefferts Corners to fight back. Thus, when the Martense lineage is destroyed in a church explosion at the film's climax, it carries little emotional resonance, despite the fact that they are direct descendants of the film's supposed protagonist.

While a missed opportunity, such obvious subtext doesn't affect the overall enjoyment of the film and, in interview, it becomes obvious that Joyner had a differing view of how to approach the project. "Full Moon was my film school in a lot of ways and they gave me a chance to direct when I wasn't that experienced, so I made some rookie mistakes. Unfortunately, instead of my mistakes being confined to a classroom, they were distributed around the world by Paramount! But when I was planning the film – and again, the production and art departments over there did a whale of a job – I thought it would be interesting to go back to a directing style à la Frank Strayer's *Vampire Bat* and Mike Curtiz' *Walking Dead*; using a lot of moving camera, with very few cuts during the dramatic moments, so that the action scenes would seem even more energetic with faster cutting and lots of coverage; I wanted that contrast. Despite what's been said, I really did have a plan. I just didn't have the experience at the time to bring it

off." Thanks to the aforementioned demolition of the dilapidated Bufta Studios back lot, Lurking Fear benefits greatly from a truly explosive finale, far bigger in scale than one would expect from your average Full Moon product. And the concise running time (barely over 75 minutes) never allows the viewer to get too fidgety or glazed of eye. Ultimately, if one is willing to overlook a few minor missteps, Courtney Joyner's Lurking Fear should provide a more than distracting hour-and-a-quarter for Lovecraft aficionados and hardcore horror fanatics alike – proof that even a supposedly sub-par Lovecraft adaptation can make for an above-par Full Moon joint.



Dave Jay is the principal author of the authorized history of Empire Pictures, *Empire of the 'B's: The Mad Movie World of Charles Band*, published by Hemlock Books in February 2014.

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BANDWIDTH

If a fortune teller would have told me in the 1960's or 70's or even 80's that in the not-too-distant future, music recorded on 33rpm records would become essentially free on something called the Internet, I would have had a hard time believing it. And when that actually became true, the notion of the physical world of movies on DVD's disappearing - along with practically every video store in the country - still seemed hard to believe - and today, this is exactly what has happened...

To add to this strange phenomenon we have Netflix and similar aggregators who have found clever ways of bringing thousands of movies into your home and charging a very modest subscription fee, a great deal for these times when people are also struggling financially. A few short years ago customers paid around \$3.00 to rent a movie at Blockbuster or Hollywood Video (both now gone), or their

local video store (long gone) and in doing so usually one of those dollars found its way back to the filmmaker. Multiply that dollar by thousands of stores and this is how we all tried and sometimes succeeded in recovering the costs of our independent films - and then we made more. Now this model is a thing of the past. What we're left with is an emerging digital world that, for the moment, offers virtually no dollars or even pennies back to the filmmaker. What is the value of a movie if 18,000 films are available on Netflix for an \$8.00 subscription fee? And to make matters worse, Netflix isn't really interested anymore in films that you, as reader of DEURIUM, may want to see. They've moved on to bigger and better things...

Now, I don't want to totally burn you out! Today, talented filmmakers and artists have access to amazingly inexpensive tools to create

music, videos and movies and then blast them out via social media. And I'm sure, as this new digital world takes shape and form, there will be ways for filmmakers to get their films into places where they'll have a chance of actually making a few bucks. That said, if you look at the music industry today, no one is really making money selling CDs anymore, rather they're touring and selling merch to turn a profit.

One thing is for sure: we're all in for a crazy media ride over the next 5-10 years. In this very near future DVDs and CDs will look like vinyl, Redbox machines will become planters and however we're watching movies and entertainment today, it will morph into something completely different. The whole situation is enough to make your head spin. It's enough to push you into a state of...DEURIUM.

—Charles Band



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